お前をお兄ちゃんにしてやろうか!?

すぎやまリュウ

kakao

Omae wo Oni-chan ni Shiteyarouka!?

MF文庫 J

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???

I don't have any parents, instead I have Grandpa and Grandma. I also have a kind uncle.

I like historical dramas, I always watch them with Grandpa. Grandma is gentle and very good at cooking. And from time to time a kind Uncle comes and buys me whatever I want.

I don't have dad, but I think of Uncle as one. When I said that, Uncle got angry. I wonder if Uncle hates it?

Uncle takes me to restaurants and treats me to children's lunch, he takes me to amusement parks and buys me new toys.

Sometimes he has very lonely eyes but whenever he looks at my face he starts smiling again. I asked Uncle why is he kind to me, but he always responded with "That's because Yoichi-kun is a good boy".

When Grandpa and Grandma are talking with Uncle, I'm not to enter the room.

At first I endured it, but after that happened many times I got curious. That's because Grandpa was shouting.

I got worried. I didn't want Grandpa and Uncle to fight.

I knew it was a bad thing... but when Grandpa learned that I was eavesdropping he got very angry.

And then, I've been told that Uncle won't come to my birthday in May... and yet, Uncle still came to my house.

"But I was told Uncle won't come today?"

"There was a change of plans. It's your long-awaited birthday after all. Congratulations, Yoichi-kun."

"Yup! Thank you!"

That was the last day Uncle appeared in front of me.

Maybe he thought I'm a bad child because I was eavesdropping and that's why?

Not being able to see a family member was very sad.

21st of April, Sunday - Prologue

Fifteen minutes left until Monday.

I went back to my room and after lying on the bed face up and continued to think. Little sister candidates... no, let's stop using candidates.

The little sisters declared to me "Shall I make you a big brother?!".

After that, we normally ate a meal together and played a game Tomomi brought.

In the end, nothing was resolved.

Murasaki-san didn't send any confirmation after that.

I continued to be dragged with the flow.

After I finally stopped being forwarded to the little sister's rooms and was alone, the more I thought I felt relieved by letting myself get dragged with the flow.

Will the little sisters' support really be aborted?

At that time, I wonder what Murasaki-san thought as she looked at my back and at the girls. I have no clue.

If I asked her then I would probably be answered with "because that's what the will says" or "it's confidential". I wonder if it's all right as long as Murasaki-san gives a silent approval.

What do I want to do? What do I want to become?

I... I want everyone... Selene, Tomomi, Sayuri, Yuuki and Mika, I want to make them all happy.

Will tomorrow be like it's been up until now, and the smart key's number will change according to the day of the week?

First I need to check that. If the situation continues, then I'd like to once again properly talk with all the little sisters.

And if possible, to meet with Murasaki-san as soon as possible and directly speak with her.

For that sake, I need to use the time I should be spending with one of the little sisters to meet with Murasaki-san

Trying to grasp Murasaki-san's heart with Mika... is not a good idea. Also, it'll be already Friday before then.

Visit Murasaki-san's room together with Selene on Monday? Nope, I feel it's impossible.

Tomomi's really weak when it comes to dealing with Murasaki-san, normal Sayuri is fine but I'm not confident as she can lose her calm any time. Yuuki would probably understand, but her time would be lost. Yeah, I'm lost again...

22nd of April, Monday

Pat pat. Evening date. From now on.

"What would you do if becoming my little sister could get you a lot of money?"

I tried asking Mariko this question after school when we were preparing to go back home.

Mariko looked down; raised her eyebrows and said "That would be troubling". When I asked her why, she got angry and started yelling at me "Idiot", "Insensitive!" and so on.

I was surprised since she normally doesn't get angry like that. Or rather, I was scared. I couldn't answer when Mariko asked me "Why did you ask such a question?" in response.

For the time being I said "It's just a hypothetical question" dodging the question. Mariko first made a baffled expression, then she blushed and laughed in embarrassment.

"Seriously, did you really consider it?"

After that Mariko forcefully changed the topic.

In the hamburger chain's store in front of the station——McDannos, there seemed to be a limited product that's to be sold only for two weeks——the fiery

burger. I was invited by Mariko to go and eat it together... but I needed to go back home and confirm what the smart key will do.

This time, when I parted ways with Mariko I promised to absolutely compensate her for that and hurried home.

It's always like that with Mariko. Once everything settles down I need to... compensate her.

When I ran back like a storm to the Taishido residence, before I noticed the number displayed on the smart key's LCD display indicated Room 101.

I was relieved, and thought 'Is it fine to continue it like this?'. These feelings intermingled and I couldn't make heads or tails out of my emotions.

When I arrived at Selene's front door I took a deep breath to adjust my feelings and rang the room's chime.

After about ten seconds the door opened.

"...what is it Onii-chan?"

Peeking out of the slightly opened door's gap and tilting her head was a black-haired pretty girl. She had fine skin as white as snow.

I feel like her complexion has improved compared to our first meeting.

I nodded when I saw Selene's deeply-coloured eyes.

"Rather than a particular business it's... um... it seems like the situation from the last week continues."

She considered it and nodded. Normally she's acting as if she was in a daze, but strangely there are times where she acts based on her intuition. Her mother is a fortune-teller, maybe Selene has also inherited the talent.

"...come in for the time being. The outside air is poisonous after all."

"Hey hey. Are you back to being a shut-in?"

"...hurry up Onii-chan."

Her slender hands stretched from the opened door. Selene took my hand and pulled me inside.

Although we cleaned it together before, Selene's room already went back to its original devastated state.

"Geez. Why is the laundry piled up in the corner of the room?"

"...I think it's better than drying them. Even if they are folded they will need ironing anyways before they are worn, so it's more reasonable to just leave them as they are right from the start."

"Haa..."

100% of Selene's cleaning ability is pumped into cleaning and segregating cloth accessories and materials associated with her work.

Her remaining cleaning ability isn't enough to even clean the clothes she uses every day.

"...but I properly decorated the case with my favourite figurines."

"O-oh, that's admirable."

As I looked inside acrylic case, on the shelves I saw neatly ordered figurines. Selene moved closer to me without making any sounds, her head was turned towards me.

"Um, what is it, Selene-san?"

"...the girl who did her best has to be praised."

"Y-yes. Um... and more specifically?"

"...please pat my head."

I gently stroked her head. The black and shiny hair felt silky to the touch, it flowed through the palm of my hand. It really is beautiful.

"...this is happiness."

Selene murmured without any intonation and sat down where she stood.

"...after happiness, it would be good to drink tea or coffee."

"As usual you're always ready to slack off."

She pointed with her finger at the text printed on her favourite T-shirt, it said 'working is losing'.

Her policy is the same as ever.

"...so, what does Onii-chan want?"

I found two mug cups in the kitchen. Since there were black tea bags in the cupboard so I put one in each of the cups and poured the water from an electric kettle.

With the cups that still had teabags in it I proudly puffed my chest.

"What I want... become my little sister!"

"...I refuse."

Instant answer.

"W-why?"

"...please sit first, Onii-chan."

I put the cups on the table and sat on the other side of the table right in front of Selene.

"...listen Onii-chan. I want to follow the way I have chosen. Without relying on Onii-chan, I want to live as an independent woman."

She sipped the tea from the mug that still had a tea bag in it, and made a proud expression.

I stood up and walked away, took a small dish from the kitchen and after removing a tea bag from the cup, I put it on the dish.

"Onii-chan is worried about Selene as she doesn't even remove the teabag from the cup."

"...it's a bother so I don't. It's a reasonable decision. I thought Onii-chan would understand it."

She stared back at me with a sad expression on her face, I spat out a sigh in my mind.

"Then Selene... What about... the school today?"

Her cute middle school's uniform was still without a single wrinkle. After she heard that, her eyes that seemed like they enshrined all the sadness of this world suddenly glittered and tears started flowing.

"...umm, it's founding anniversary."

"I'll look into it later."

"...I'm sorry."

"Considering you're very honest, I'll pretend that never happened... but you have to properly attend school from now on..."

"...Onii-chan. In fact, I don't know what I should do now."

"You don't know?"

"...yes. I have determination to go down the path I found... but I don't know what's ahead."

Selene who has decided what she wants to do and faced forward, but realized that her ability to prepare and execute plans is lacking... something like that.

It seems like because I pushed her back, I've caused her to feel uneasy.

Listening to little sister's troubles is Brother's duty and his joy. I told her what I thought.

"Why don't you try going to school first? Although with the uncertain circumstances we're currently in, we don't know what's going to happen to you afterwards and we'll continue being uneasy."

"...Onii-chan, what do you intend to do from now on?"

It might be a coincidence but Selene asked me about the thing that I was wondering about deep inside... what do I intend to do... what I want to do.

Yes, in fact the one who's looking for help is me.

I'm anxious not knowing whether I can convince Murasaki-san alone or not.

But it would be hard to say 'Let's go and talk with Murasaki-san together' to Selene right now. It didn't seem like she's able to hold out under the burden of two problems at once.

"In the near future, I intend to find some time and go speak with Murasaki-san and confirm what's ahead. You should think about your own problems, don't worry about me."

"...understood. I'm sorry for not being of help to Onii-chan."

"Y-you don't need to apologize. It's Onii-chan's role to protect his little sisters."

Selene nodded lightly and sipped the tea.

"...what should we do today."

"I wonder. I can't go back to my own room until the time comes... it would be great if I could stay here."

She once again stared straight at me.

"...Onii-chan... um... is it fine to continue calling you Onii-chan?"

"Of course! There is no conflict between you finding your own way and me being your Onii-chan."

Her not wanting to be my little sister yet calling me like that is kinda weird though.

"...okay. Umm, if Onii-chan doesn't mind, I have a request."

"Cleaning together again?"

Selene energetically shook her head, her black silky hair fluttered. She continued with a tremulous voice.

"...go on a d-date...with me..."

"Date... you want go out right now?!"

"...to be exact, starting from the moment sun disappears. If I'm exposed to sunlight I'll disappear."

"You were a mermaid earlier, when did you become a vampire?"

"...if I incorporate an essence of chuunibyou[1], I'll be able to expand repertoire of possible outfit designs."

It would be easy to say 'I wonder about that' and deny it but I didn't want to discourage Selene who finally started thinking positively.

"Then, let's go out after sunset."

She squinted happily.

"...thank you very much. If it's with Onii-chan, I'll go out."

It's troubling that she can't go outside without me. But since Selene said she wants to go out by her own initiative, then it's a great improvement. I need to respect those feelings of hers.

Selene and I waited for sunset to come, and headed to town. However, it felt somewhat like a failure, we went to the station, same as last week.

I accompanied her as she bought a new mug——and when she said she wants to eat the new fiery burger.

It was exactly as advertised, it was big and so spicy it made my tongue numb.

Eating the large patty in a bun was enough. Finishing the crisp lettuce from the burger was a high level task.

But the main problem, was its spiciness.

At first glance, it was the unchanging ketchup and sauce based on a paste made from jalapeño, habanero and jolokia. I can still remember its hotness and how painful it was. I felt an illusion as if all the pores on my body opened, it was hard.

Thanks to that, sweat was flowing from us like a waterfall. As our lips swelled, both Selene and I started laughing at each other's faces.

Selene was interested in a game centre located in downtown. Since it was six o'clock in the evening, she couldn't enter as she was underage; frustrated, she promised to come back again to have her revenge.

After that we spent time by looking at waves of people flooding the station, and Selene took a break in the park drunk after seeing a huge amount of people.

We toured the city together, and around eight o'clock our date ended.

On the way back to the mansion, Selene was sitting in the window seat of the bus. She quietly muttered when the bus has stopped at one of the stations.

"...Onii-chan, what are you going to do from now on?"

Her gaze was still directed towards the window. She stared blankly as the scenery appeared and disappeared. As the outside was dark, the window reflected her face like a mirror.

I, who was sitting beside her, nodded.

"Just like I said earlier, I'll confirm it with Murasaki-san first. In the future, there's a possibility everyone will scatter, but even if you live elsewhere you are still my little sisters."

After taking a breath, I continued without pausing.

"It's the best if everyone can stay together, that's why I will inquire with Murasaki-san if that's possible. That's the first thing to do."

"...and what's the second?"

"To speak with everyone. Just like I did today with you."

Continuing, a question spilled out of my mouth.

"Speaking of which, why have you said 'Shall I make you big brother?!'? Back then with everyone else."

"...that's."

Selene turned around and made a pondering expression.

"...a coincidence?"

She tilted her neck and asked me instead, staring at me blankly.

"As if coincidences like that happen!"

"...we are sisters so we think alike."

All five of them had different personalities, moreover all of them were at different ages. It was unlikely that Mika, the youngest child who was still in elementary school came up with these words.

Maybe when I was sleeping, or when I was taking a bath, they must have talked about something just between the sisters.

If I questioned her any longer it would be 'Selene has given it away to me!' situation. She was reluctant to say anything, I couldn't help but think it was a secret.

Selene nestled up to me leaving her weight on my shoulders.

A shampoo which gave out a rosy scent made my heart beat faster... no, it comforted me.

"...please let me stay like this for a while."

I nodded lightly. The shaking of the bus was pleasant, and I dozed off.

I had family beside me. At a distance from which I could feel her warmth.

It was a pleasant feeling, I felt my head drifting away.

Just for a while longer, let's stay like this for a little longer...

And as we stayed like that, the two of us missed the bus stop nearest to mansion,

Notes and References

↑. colloquial and rather derisive term in Japan which describes a person at the age of fourteen would either act like a know-it-all adult, or thinks they have special powers no one else has.

23rd of April, Tuesday

Memories. Ambush. Spring storm.

According to the weather forecast a storm will hit during today's spring evening.

Ever since morning Mariko was unable to remain calm and kept fidgeting.

Was she worried about weather? I thought that and asked her. It seems like it wasn't the weather but her family was what she was troubled about.

Mariko has a a little sister in middle school, Chitose-chan. She noticed her little sister's strange behaviour recently... and she's worried that she might have found a boyfriend.

The Chitose-chan I knew was a shy and withdrawn girl. At least that's the impression I got because she always hid behind Mariko.

So it was a bit surprising to me that she had a boyfriend. She was like a young duck going after its parents and followed her Onee-chan... I think Mariko was being overprotective.

Back then she was too embarrassed to make eye contact with me, who was Mariko's friend.

I said a baseless follow-up to her "No matter how much you worry, it won't help unless you see them, I'm sure it's all right".

Mariko responded with a dispirited "I guess". She seemed quite overwhelmed by it.

No matter what kind of boy it was, it seemed like Mariko was concerned just by knowing it was a boy. Certainly, if my little sister got a lover... I would be worried too.

My little sisters too, will one day find someone they love.

Although I have to bless them as their brother, that makes me a bit... uneasy.

I somehow survived the classes and went back home, the everyday change of the room's number on the smart key continued.

I stood in front of Room 601's door and sounded the chime. The key unlocked the door, but entering a little sister's room without knocking was rude. There's a need to show some respect.

However, the game-loving Tomomi might have been glued to the controller.

The door wasn't opening... I tried opening it slightly and looked inside.

Instead of hearing gunfire and explosion sounds I found... Tomomi sitting in seiza[1] and waiting for me. She was in rough clothing comprised of a T-shirt and hot pants.

"I have awaited you, Nii-chan!"

She looked up at me with a stiff expression and tried to stand up.

"Why are you in seiza?!"

"I was looking forward to seeing Nii-chan so much that I got the feeling as if it was right before the release of an epic game. A'right, I stood up! Yeahh!"

Because she was sitting in seiza posture, she was unfamiliar with her feet that had gone numb, and the usually agile Tomomi ran to me while staggering like a zombie.

I've caught her.

The moment she hugged me, I felt an unnerving elastic texture press against me.

"Nii-chan, I don't feel my legs! It's super extra numbness!"

"Just how long were you sitting like that?"

"About thirty minutes. Mufuun, I'm so happy to get a hug from Nii-chan."

"Let's go to the living room for now. Can you walk?"

"I invoke the right of princess carry."

"Let go of me."

"No no nooooo. Tch. Nii-chan's stingy."

I lent Tomomi a shoulder and we arrived in the living room. She sat down on the sofa and stretched her legs. I also sat down on the sofa. The room didn't change from before, the surround speakers and the large TV were still there. Plastic models still adorned the shelves.

"So, what did Nii-chan come here for? Did you come to be mushy mushy with me?"

"Mushy mushy... of course I think of getting along with Tomomi as siblings..."

"I refuse!"

Tomomi leaned forward from the sofa and cut in brightly. I diverted my gaze away from her chest which shook from the momentum.

"Nii-chan, look over here properly."

"Y-yeah, sorry... you refuse?"

She made a big nod.

"Does Nii-chan want to make me his little sister?"

"Of course. Not only Tomomi, I want all of you to be my little sisters. I don't know what to do yet, but I do have such intention."

"I've already said that I don't want to become a little sister haven't I? Instead, I'm ready to make you big brother though."

"So is there any difference?"

Tomomi vigorously nodded again.

"Yup. I don't want to be protected by Nii-chan. At the very least I want to be on equal footing with you. That's why I don't want you to make me your little sister. That's my 'Shall I make you big brother?!'."

As she said that, she downcast her gaze and blushed.

"But you see, me wanting to be mushy mushy with Nii-chan is true. I want to have fun during the time we spend together, I'm an onee-chan when we're all together right? The eldest daughter? I'm in a position that requires me to act responsibly."

"Y-yeah, you're right."

"That's why just when we're alone together, I want to be spoiled by Nii-chan a lot you see..."

A maiden's heart is complex but not as much as Tomomi's little sister's heart.

"You don't want me to make you a little sister, but you want to be spoiled by me... is that what it means."

"If Nii-chan is all right with it, I'm prepared for tickling revenge match or carbonated drink-all-at-once match. I prepared a vast menu of matches."

"But that isn't you being spoiled is it?"

Tomomi puckered her lips and twisted her body.

"I just want Nii-chan to pay attention to me! However, being spoiled isn't the only thing I want. I myself don't know my own feelings. My status screen has been showing that I'm in 'confused' state for a while now."

She made a troubled face and raised her eyebrows.

"C-calm down. First of all, take a deep breath."

Suu...haa...suu...haa!, even as she took deep breaths Tomomi continued to fidget.

"I haven't won any match, but can I request something of Nii-chan?"

"As long as it's something I can do."

"I-I want a lap pillow."

If she calms down that much, then fine. As I nodded, Tomomi bounced up and fell down right next to me, she put her head on top of my lap.

"So this is Nii-chan's lap pillow, a bit high up."

I responded jokingly to her.

"Indeed, it seems like the height adjustment has been jinxed."

While having her head on top of my lap, Tomomi let all the strength in her body fade.

"Have you calmed down?"

"It feels good, Nii-chan. Umm... Nii-chan, do you know about Daddy?"

"By Daddy you mean... about Jinya-san?"

My recognition of him as my father was quite ambiguous... probably that's the reason I've started to call him 'Jinya-san'.

For Tomomi Taishido, Jinya was also her father.

"Yup. I've never met him. Did you, Nii-chan?"

"I did. However, I didn't know he was my father. A kind uncle who comes occasionally... that was the feeling."

"Hee. So he was kind."

"He listened to any request I've told him... but when I recall it, it didn't feel like a father. More like a sorcerer or a Santa Claus."

"What's that? I know that Santa Claus real identity is that of Daddy, but for Daddy's real identity to be Santa Claus?"

"That's a strange way to put it, but it's exactly that kind of impression. It's very vague, but the image of father I have is that of a strong and scary person, Jinya-san was far from that..."

Tomomi responded with a "Hmmm" raising a voice full of emotions. I continued.

"More importantly, is it really true that you never met him?"

"That's right."

She nodded with an careless expression.

"Speaking of which, what did you do until you came here? You never came here to meet Jinya-san, did you?"

"I didn't. By the way, I've been in the house of Mommy's relatives. I don't remember it well, but it seems like I was problematic... that's what I think now. My relatives were strangers after all... they didn't become my family."

As Tomomi toned down depressed, I started stroking her head.

"Hey! Nii-chan, that's a foul!"

"S-sorry. So you wanted to be tickled?"

"Not that... I was just surprised because it was sudden. Umm... it's all right to continue. Use surprise attacks all you want! I accept the challenge!"

Tomomi faced away as she lay down on my lap, but that wasn't an angry voice at all.

She continued.

"Nii-chan, tell me more about Daddy."

"Even if you ask me, I don't know what to tell you..."

Tomomi didn't know anything about Taishido Jinya, probably neither has Selene, Sayuri, Yuuki nor Mika. I don't know what was the reason, but he only met with me, the eldest son... he was a horrible father after all.

"Anything is fine. How many times did you meet?"

"About once a month."

"What did you do when you met?"

The fact that I was given preferential treatment stabbed into my chest like a needle. It seemed like Tomomi guessed what I thought and said brightly.

"You don't need to refrain yourself because of me. I was the one who asked."

I nodded deep inside my mind.

"Umm... we went out to eat together a lot. Also, he took me to department stores and bought me some toys. Just as I told you before, he was like a Santa Claus who came once in a month. He listened to whatever selfish request I made."

"Was he a good person?"

"He was a gentle person."

"I see..."

Tomomi continued with a lonely tone.

"Listen, me too... we too were given support, it's not only Nii-chan who's special."

She was concerned about me.

"Hey Tomomi, about the support and all that's to be from now on. I think we need to speak with Murasaki-san."

She raised her head and turned around towards me.

"Then let's go right now, Nii-chan!"

"Now?"

"If we're to go, then the faster the better."

"You're right. Then, I'm going."

I rose up from the sofa, Tomomi beside me shook her head energetically.

"I won't let Nii-chan go alone."

"You're going to help me persuade her?"

"Yup. I'm the eldest daughter, ain't I. Since I'm on equal footing with the eldest son, you can rely on me. I want to lend my strength to Nii-chan."

She said so proudly and puffed her chest. I nodded while removing my line of sight from the bulge which let out a *boing* sound.

"Sorry... no, thank you Tomomi. It's very encouraging."

"If I'm not wrong she's in room 202."

"Eh? Why do you know where Murasaki-san's room is?"

"Umm, look! I've heard from Mika. Let's depart immediately, shall we, Nii-chan?"

"But is it fine? Today is Tomomi's day, don't you... want to be spoiled?"

"It's fine, it's fine. Let's finish the talk fast and as long as you take care of me it's all okaay."

Even so, she won't become my little sister... will she.

My hand was pulled by Tomomi, and we left the room together.

After going down to the second floor by elevator, we stood in front of room 202 which was next to Mika's. Of course my smart key didn't react to room 201 or 202.

Tomomi and I made a determined stand arm in arm right in front of the door.

"What kind of ambush would be the best, Nii-chan?"

"Heyy, what ambush... can't we just normally sound the chime?"

"But we can't shake her up like that right? If we attack her from the front, we'll encounter her defense. We need to attack the enemy from an angle she doesn't expect and push to win!"

She theory-crafted the tactical approach. For her to come up with such an idea, she's truly a pro gamer... I was honestly impressed.

There was some truth in what Tomomi said about doing a feint attack.

To break through Murasaki-san's guard, we might need to take special action. But it's best if we don't offend her.

Tomomi took a peek at the intercom's camera.

"I have an idea."

"Before we execute it, could you tell me what kind of plan is it?"

"The fact that Nii-chan might come must be within Murasaki-san's expectations. First I will call Murasaki-san myself. Nii-chan will squat down in front of the door so that he doesn't appear on the camera."

"Oh-ho, I see. And then?"

"I will call Murasaki-san by saying 'There's something I want to talk about'. When Murasaki-san opens the door, Nii-chan will appear from under her feet. And then, Nii-chan will put a foot in the gap of the door so that it can't be closed."

"But doesn't that mean that the surprised Murasaki-san will shut the door and my feet will be hurt?"

"Bear with it, Nii-chan. There are scenes like that in detective movies and games. If you worry about a little bit of pain it'll be GAME OVER. If Nii-chan doesn't want to do it, how about I do it?"

"A-all right. Let's go with that plan."

I squatted down by the wall right by the entrance and hidden in the blind spot of the door, my leg was extended and on standby.

Right before the interphone Tomomi sank down lowering herself. We would look like suspicious people if one would look at us from the side.

"All right, let's go Nii-chan."

Tomomi pressed the interphone's button, but there was no reply. She might have been absent, or maybe she didn't want to answer after seeing Tomomi's face from the camera.

Just as I thought that, the door of the Room 202 suddenly opened and Murasaki-san jumped out.

Moreover, she was half-naked.

Her body was just covered with a towel lightly wound around her. Her partially wet hair wasn't covered with anything. On her skin were visible water droplets.

A soft smell of a soap drifted from her.

It seemed like Murasaki-san rushed out from under a shower to respond. Now she raised her voice in panic.

"What happened Mika-sa..."

Murasaki-san's line of sight has caught me.

Since Mika's name appeared, and Murasaki-san lowered her gaze... it means she must have misunderstood and thought that it was Mika who had called her out.

She saw that I was squatting at an angle which made it seem as if I tried to look at her bottom.

"KYYAAAAAAAAAAAAaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!"

"I'm sorry I'm sorry! This is umm, eh, a misunderstanding!"

I screamed as well.

"Eh, err, Murasaki-san, Nii-chan has something to talk about!"

Murasaki-san lost her calm and tried to close the door. Tomomi was confused as well and she pulled the door as not to let Murasaki-san close it.

"Wait Murasaki-san! Please listen to what Nii-chan has to say!"

"NNNNOoooooooooooooooooooooooo!"

At first Murasaki-san tried to close the door with one hand, then she used both. That moment... her towel slid off.

Just before the door was closed with a loud thud, Murasaki-san's appearance just as she was born has been burned firmly into my eyes.

A minute later, Tomomi and I looked at my smartphone as a mail came from Murasaki-san saying 'Please wait 10 minutes.'.

Exactly ten minutes later, Murasaki-san appeared in front of us with her hair dry and dressed in a suit.

She was wearing rimless glasses. I see, so she's usually wearing contacts.

Even so, she was incredibly calm as if her scream from a while ago never happened.

Murasaki-san nodded lightly.

"I apologize for the disturbance earlier."

I responded dryly.

"I-I apologize as well. Please don't mind it."

Ah, what am I saying. Murasaki-san had no expression and her face was like a noh mask. She invited Tomomi and me inside.

"You have something to talk about. Could you tell me in more detail?"

"Sorry to intrude."

"Nii-chan, you saw Murasaki-san naked earlier, didn't you?"

"H-hey! What are you suddenly..."

Tomomi elbowed me, her line of sight was directed towards Murasaki-san's face.

Her expression didn't change. After confirming that, Tomomi dropped her shoulders.

It seems like in these ten minutes Murasaki-san has entered her on-guard mode.

We moved to the living room. There was only a minimum of equipment and simple furniture, not even a TV was there.

The sky outside the window was covered with thick clouds, the room was dim.

Murasaki-san lit the lights, Tomomi and I sat down on the sofa side by side. After I sat down, Murasaki-san started to stare at my face.

"What is your business."

"Um, about earlier... I apologize."

"What do you mean?"

Her words didn't indicate she was angry, but Murasaki-san seemed cold and distant. Tomomi once again unnaturally cleared it up.

"Nii-chan means the fact that he saw Murasaki-san naked earlier."

Tomomi was probably trying to upset Murasaki-san.

But Murasaki-san spoke without batting an eyelid.

"That was my carelessness. I was sure that Mika came to play... no, I had an erroneous thought that some kind of urgent problem had come up which required my immediate assistance."

Her appearance didn't change, but Murasaki-san was probably... shaken.

"Come on Nii-chan, back to main topic!"

Tomomi winked to me, it seemed like she noticed Murasaki-san's weird state as well.

"Umm, Murasaki-san. Could you tell us what the current state of the situation is? Even though it's past the two weeks deadline, I still haven't decided on a little sister. In fact the support should have ceased and everyone should have scattered, shouldn't they? Why hasn't that happened yet?"

Murasaki-san looked away from me for a moment.

"I can't answer that."

Angry because she refused to answer, Tomomi raised her eyebrows.

"Why can't you answer?"

"I cannot disclose the will of the deceased."

Once again, it's because that's what will says... is it.

When I thought about it, I was reminded that when I first heard about it I was overpowered by these words.

Just what kind of will has Taishido Jinya left behind?

Tomomi became even more displeased.

"Then, can we stay like this forever?"

"I can't answer that."

While Tomomi spat these words out all fired up, Murasaki-san confronted it as if she was a wall of ice.

The atmosphere was boiling and it seemed like it would explode at any moment. I too was troubled when I heard 'I can't answer that' for an answer, but it was also a fact that we could live like this thanks to her.

And that we could be like we are now, is also thanks to Murasaki-san preparing everything.

"It should be fine to properly answer it!"

As Tomomi's shoulders trembled with anger, I patted her gently to calm her down.

It should be me who's angry here.

But I couldn't. I didn't think of Murasaki-san as a cold person. She liked Mika, after mistaking them for Mika she immediately jumped out to meet her despite being in the shower.

"Tomomi, Murasaki-san has a duty to protect the confidentiality. I think she won't say it now."

Murasaki-san didn't react to my words. She neither confirmed nor denied. It looked like 'something' tied Murasaki-san's mouth. Tomomi spat out a small sigh.

"Nii-chan should also tell her off."

Tomomi looked down and said that. Murasaki-san turned towards me once again.

"...I'm sorry, please leave for today."

She lowered her head apologetically.

What we came to do today, was to check if we can make her talk if we spend a longer period of time for it. No, even despite wanting her to reveal it, I didn't have any guarantee she would do so in the end.

I stood up from the sofa.

"Um, then... I'll say how I feel about it. It's not possible for me to choose only one person. If I were to choose between the assets and the little sisters, I choose the little sisters. However, since I'm a high school student I have no money... that's why, honestly. I know it is selfish of me. But at least do not abort everyone's support."

"Please leave for today."

It seemed like there was nothing I could cling onto. Murasaki-san once again fell silent and bowed.

Tomomi puffed her cheeks as soon as we left Room 202.

"Nii-chan, why did you help Murasaki-san! Were you that excited by her adult naked body?"

"You're wrong! That was an accident!"

"I wonder... hey, can it be that Nii-chan prefers older girls? Are younger girls no good? Is the same age in safe zone?"

"Why would you ask me such a thing out of the blue?"

"By the way, how about that childhood classmate of yours?"

"I-it has nothing to do with Mariko, does it?"

As soon as I spoke Mariko's name, Tomomi became even more grumpy. Don't be offended just because I didn't tell you.

"Hmph! Oh right Nii-chan! Let's eat some burgers to cheer ourselves up! I've heard about a new product."

The newest product she spoke about must have been the fiery burger. Just by recalling it my lips started to swell. Eating it for two days consecutively would be too hard.

"Sorry about that Tomomi. In fact, I ate it yesterday together with Selene. It was really hard. Eating it two days in a row is a bit..."

"So Nii-chan really went on a date with Selene?!"

"Since Selene's a bit of a shut-in, I wanted her to come outside for a while."

"I see... you're not just my Nii-chan, that's right. Yup! Then let's go to a family restaurant, and let's play monhun on our mobile phones until it's the middle of the night!"[2]

"I won't play with you, but I'm fine with going to a family restaurant."

We aren't too good at cooking after all.

There was an Italian-type family restaurant called 'Saesulia' near the bus stop. The meat doria[3] and drinks are cheap over there.

"A date with Nii-chan a date a date! So much fun∽ I'm so happy∽!!"

Tomomi and I went down with an elevator to the first floor. We went outside leaving the entrance hall, and I stopped my legs.

A strong wind raged outside the entrance. The sky has turned white for an instant and a loud roar came from far away.

It seemed like there was a lightning. It was big and close.

As if it was a signal, rain dropped from the thick clouds. As a violent downpour hit the ground, I smoothly turned to look at Tomomi's face.

"Can we do it next time?"

"When's the next time?"

"Like... next week."

Tomomi energetically shook her head.

"NO NO NO NOOOOOOO! I want a reward for cooperating with Nii-chan today!!"

"But in this rain, it seems like delivery service is impossible as well... that's troubling."

"Nii-chan's an idiott! I want to go on a date as well! Let's take an umbrella and go!"

"It seems like the umbrella would be blown away."

Suddenly Tomomi's voice has clouded over and she let out.

"NII-CHAN'S AN IDIOTTTTTTTTTTT! YOU CAN EAT BREAD CRUSTS ALONE FOR ALL CARE!"

"H-hey Tomomi!"

Tomomi turned back from Onee-chan mode into little sister mode... or rather, a spoiled child mode. She went inside the elevator and pressed the button, the door closed with only one person inside.

Before I noticed, I'd already been left behind in the hall. Honestly, I didn't think Tomomi could act like that. I had a bad feeling about this. I needed to chase her!

I ran up the stairs, the sixth floor was high up. My heart was beating strongly, my legs were extra heavy because I didn't have any warm-up.

And yet, I ended up being late, unable to catch the elevator.

I proceeded towards Room 601 while out of breath. Even if it's locked from the inside, the smart key would open Tomomi room's door, so there was no reason to run. But I thought about it too late.

I tried calling Tomomi through the interphone but there was no reaction.

I opened the door... or rather tried to. The door stopped after opening slightly. A chain lock was hung from the inside.

Tomomi must have been furious. I tried to call out to her through the small opening.

"Heey Tomomi! Tomomi-chan! Tomomi-san! Tomomi-oneechan!"

There was no reply. Just when I thought that, a thunder-like roar sounded from inside the room. It seemed like she started playing a game.

My voice has been easily drowned in the intense gunfire.

There was no reaction as I tried to send her a mail from my smartphone. It seemed like it would be a nuisance to neighbours if I left the door opened. That might have been Tomomi's aim.

I gave up and closed the doors. I was shut outside completely without any idea as to why that had happened.

For the time being, I went back to the entrance hall on the first floor, and through the front door made out of glass, I looked outside in a daze. I searched the banners and signboards for a shop we can go to.

I tried mailing Tomomi once again.

But what should I say to fix her mood?

It would be fine if I could write 'Let's go to family restaurant right now!' to break through her storm of fury, but I couldn't do it on that day because of wind and thunder.

Notes and References

↑ 1. one of the traditional formal ways of sitting in Japan.

↑ 2. Yes, Monster Hunter reference

↑ 3. ED: Rice gratin

24th of April, Wednesday

Change. Different person. Dependent on text.

Mariko came over to my seat after the first period ended. It seemed like she regained her composure and was calm this morning.

She asked me to lend her my smartphone for a moment. She said something about a free calls application called STRING. It seemed to be very popular and people often talked about it. Not only calls could be made from it, but one also could chat and play games on it.

I wasn't really interested in that, but my resistance has been overpowered by Mariko, and in the end I allowed her to install STRING.

Mariko explained to me how to operate the simple app. Apparently it was something made for groups of people.

Since I had no idea how convenient it is, Mariko made a group just for the two of us for the time being. Although we could just mail each other if it's the two of us, STRING seemed to be something recommended for more users to speak with each other simultaneously.

If I were to make a group with little sisters, then even if something happened... even if we were scattered we would still be connected with each other. That's what I vaguely thought.

After returning home I went to the Room 501. Wednesday is Sayuri's day.

I pressed on the interphone's button, and Sayuri immediately came out to meet me.

"Welcome back, Onii-sama."

"I'm back... eh?"

I've been caught in the flow and said so. But this is Sayuri's room and not mi... eh?

I couldn't believe my eyes. Sayuri's girly but simple attire has changed into something really glamorous.

Somehow, it felt really girly and light. It was so perfect it seemed like it came out straight out of a fashion magazine. Sayuri was wearing a fitting pale pink dress with floral design on it.

Moreover, her hair was longer now. It was a hairstyle that packed a plenty of semi-long atmosphere and gave her a slightly mature look.

"W-why a katsura?"

"This isn't katsura, it's a wig." [1]

"Then, those clothes... what on earth."

"Onii-sama, um... d-does it look good on me?"

I felt like it was unlike Sayuri.

Even so, if she asks me whether it looks good on her, I have to answer like this.

"Yeah, it does."

"That's great. I tried being bolder and I was worried that it might have been too flashy. Also, not just the outside but what's under is cute as well?"

She squeezed the hem of the dress with one hand and started raising it.

"Wa-wait a moment!"

"Onii-sama needs to confirm it himself properly."

"I can't I won't!"

"It can't be that you don't want to get aroused by your little sister's underwear can it?"

"There's something wrong with that question!"

I turned around on my heel. In front of me there was the front door.

"I'm going home."

"Please wait Onii-sama. I do not mind being pushed down any time, but being being acted coldly towards is one thing I won't stand."

Sayuri was the same as ever. I reluctantly turned towards her and saw her drop her shoulders crestfallen.

"I don't act coldly because I want to."

"Why do you act that way then?"

"Listen Sayuri. Having a little sister show his older brother her panties is bad. In more than just one way."

"The more more risky the more exciting it is. Aah! How could I not notice. Onii-sama is the type that makes the other party excited by looking at them with cold gaze right? Oh well, that is also a way of showing affection. Please hurry up and look at me with contempt then."

Sayuri looked up at me while still holding her head down.

What's inside hasn't changed... or rather, it got worse. However, judging just by her appearance she's a completely different person.

Standing in front of me was a different Sayuri - Sayuri who's not a younger sister. I might have not recognized her were we to pass by each other in the city.

I wondered if it was just because she changed the length of her hair. Earlier, the sibling relationship before has reset, and probably because of that I have this delusion.

"Don't worry I won't scorn you, I have no interests like that. Can I come in?"

"This room is Onii-sama's as well, there's no need for such confirmation. I'll prepare tea immediately."

Sayuri headed towards the living room at brisk pace. I made a loud sigh and took off my boots, the moment I entered the living room Kyuu-chan the Myna bird cried out.

『"Image change! Image change! As not to give off a feeling of a little sister I need to turn into a grown-up!"』

So that's how it is. However, to suddenly grow up... speaking of which, Tomomi asked something about Murasaki-san and older girls...

When I comfortably sat settled down on sofa, Sayuri came back from the kitchen holding a tray on which were teacups and a teapot.

"It might be abrupt, but if it's possible please get rid of any awareness you have about us being siblings. When it's just the two of us then can I call you Yoichi-san, Yoichi-kun, or Yoichi-senpai...?"

After passing a cup of tea to me, she came up with a proposal.

"Sayuri is still... want me... umm..."

Confirming it is difficult. Asking my own little sister 'Want to be my lover?' is something hard.

I wondered if she still hasn't given up.

"You don't think... of wanting to be my... l-lover, do you?"

"Of course I do. On top of becoming Yoichi-san's lover, I can do a little sister play making you my big brother."

I don't get it. What was Sayuri talking about? Currently I'm quite confused.

"Don't just switch like that to calling me by my name! 'Onii-sama' is quite exaggerated but please continue calling me that."

"I understand, Onii-sama. Ahh, despite being real siblings and becoming lovers we also do a sibling play, we truly are a pair of immoral siblings."

"No, nonono. We're not doing anything immoral! Where have these words came from."

Sayuri made a pristine smile.

"I'm very good at collecting information from internet. Precisely because it is forbidden, love between siblings is blazing hot."

"Just because that's what was written on the internet doesn't mean you can treat it as an established fact!"

"With that said... the tea will turn cold. Please drink Onii-sama. It's a 100% ordinary tea."

That lead up... I hope she didn't put some kind of strange medicine inside... Hey, what am I suspecting my little sister of here.

I took a breath to calm down. It was the same tea Sayuri always brewed, there was a faintly sweet taste to it.

Once again I confirmed with her.

"Will you become my little sister?"

"I refuse. I will not settle for a simple relationship between elder brother and little sister, I will become a no less than a lover."

So she's fine with any relationship beyond that of lovers. But being a lover is included in all of those.

Selene wants to be independent.

Tomomi wants to be on equal footing with me.

And Sayuri wants to become my lover.

The reasons are different for all three of them, but they don't want to be simple little sisters as they are now. I wonder about what to do for now.

"By the way Sayuri, how come you started wearing such kind of fashionable clothes?"

"It's an image change. From a cute little sister, to a wonderful lover. I'm reborn like a butterfly from a chrysalis."

I looked around the room. As if saying that she doesn't mind me seeing them, the fashion magazines were cleanly lined up on the shelf. The colour in which the magazine names were written was mostly red. I was reminded of what I talked about with Mariko on the chat earlier.

"If you grow a bit more, you might become a model for these types of magazines."

"Onii-sama's such a smoothtalker. However, I will leave that kind of thing to Yuuki-san. What I want is strictly to become Onii-sama's lover."

That's heavy. Please don't stare at me with those glittering eyes.

"Why have you suddenly started giving out onee-san vibes? Tomomi's influence?"

"I don't really want to become like the oldest daughter. It's just that if I had a little sister's position, no matter what kind of approach were I to take I wouldn't be able to make Onii-sama's heart mine. 'Is there not enough adult charm?' kind of feeling.

"And so, you started studying fashion magazines which in the end resulted with that style... right."

"Yes! Up until now I only wore plain clothes after all."

As a girl, Sayuri tries very hard. That's why I want to praise her for it. I want to but, praising her = acknowledge her = expansion of her lover logic and theory.

"I-I liked Sayuri as she was up until now as well."

"Is that so? So did I took a wrong approach?"

"No, rather than wrong, the more variations you have available the more options you have to use."

She let out a genuinely relieved breath.

"That's great. On a side note, I thought it might not be to Onii-sama's tastes and I have decided not to use a 'gal' approach."

Uu... that's a great judgement. Of course, I don't mind them and I probably could happily chat with the gal-type girl's, but honestly I'm not sure what should we talk about. I'm glad my little sister didn't become a gal-type girl... hey, why am I explaining myself here.

"Did something happen Onii-sama?'

"No, not really... now then, what shall we do today?"

"It should be fine to continue what are we doing now?"

"About that, yesterday... I went to Murasaki-san's room together with Tomomi."

"Although there was no result."

"Yeah. It's very delicate but we managed to maintain the status quo. For now, there should be no movement until the weekend... but that's just my wishful thinking."

"Today's the last day I can stay with Onii-sama alone together isn't it? It's the time given to us before we reluctantly part from each other isn't it?"

Sayuri said something pessimistic with a smile on her face.

"You're in awfully high spirits. Can it be that you've heard anything from Murasaki-san? Maybe there was an official notice of time extension?"

"No, there's no such thing. We just obtained a way of contacting each other even if we scatter about everywhere."

She picked up her smartphone and put it on the table.

"I'm not saying Onii-sama is too eager. But being unable to meet each other doesn't mean we will die. Also... even if someone else will be added to documents, I will become the lover."

And she smiled! What a dreadful girl!

Still, I was a bit relieved. Certainly I was doing my best, but it wasn't as if I couldn't do anything.

It's not that I should be optimistic and don't mind it at all, but I've been way too pessimistic.

Sayuri stared straight at me.

I wonder if she really wants to be my lover.

"Are you serious?"

"Of course. It is something I decided for myself and only for my own sake."

Why did she accent 'for my own sake'.

It might be my imagination, but I had an idea.

It's about Mika. If I asked she would probably deny it, but she's probably worrying about Mika and trying to make me choose her... maybe.

If that's the case, then Sayuri's a splendid Onee-chan for her little sister.

I thought Sayuri was quite weak mentally, but she unexpectedly might be tougher than me.

"By the way, how do you know the negotiations with Murasaki-san didn't go well?"

Sayuri's serious expression froze.

"Did you hear from Tomomi?"

"T-th-there's no way something like that occurred. I assumed that was the case because of Onii-sama's expression as he started to talk about it."

"O-ohh. I see. You're good at guessing."

She made a strange expression just for a moment, just what happened?

As I stared at her in suspicion, Sayuri impatiently started talking to cover it.

"Um, I apologize for changing the subject. But Onii-sama, can you tell me your plans for the next month?"

"That's quite vague if you ask me for 'plans' isn't it?"

"Rough plan is fine. Do you intend on doing something different than usual?"

"Hmm. The current situation is already different from usual... but don't think there is any. I don't have anything planned in particular. Of course, that is if the current situation will continue until next month."

"Is that so.... I understand. Now, what do we do today? All we can do right now is to eat dinner."

"Is there anything you want to do with me?"

As long as its within a range of things like lap pillow or a stroll together, I'll do it any time.

"What I want.... to do with Onii-sama..."

Just now, did Sayuri soundly swallowed her saliva... or is it my imagination?

"D-don't take it in a strange way!"

"What does it mean 'strange way'?! Please tell me Onii-sama!"

"Don't go jumping into the grave I dug for myself! Umm, then I'll say what I want."

"Y-yes. My heart is already prepared."

Sayuri blushed, downcast her eyes and started to fidgeting, rubbing her knees against each other. O' little sister, why do you go to such extremes.

I declared proudly.

"Studying!"

"That's... the study of the night?"

"Ordinary studying. Honestly, keeping up with level of private school rich people go to is hard..."

"So that's how it is. Then let's study together. When Onii-sama becomes a third year, I will be a first year student. That would be wonderful wouldn't it? Even if I'm adopted, I can become a scholarship student if I study and will be able to enter the dormitories. Attending school together with Onii-sama will be a lot of fun."

Before that happens I might fail and drop out or repeat a grade... no, isn't it convenient for Sayuri if I were to repeat a grade?!

After that I spent the time studying and reviewing until the night came. Sayuri's really smart, she was able to understand the contents just by looking at the scattered textbooks I use.

Then she started preparing problems for me. Since she understood mathematics better than I do, she taught me in great detail.

Sayuri is... she has an incredible ability to extract the key points from the text and summarize them. It's on a level where it could be called a talent.

Although I said before she was relying on manuals, but it's more like she utilizes them. She might actually be able of doing amazing things.

As I thought so, it seemed like I've been worrying too much about her.

The dinner was Sayuri's handmade cooking, Japanese cuisine which made me feel at peace.

We spoke about a lot of things as we ate a meal together.

I don't know how the current situation will evolve, but Sayuri seems to be growing tomatoes for the summer. It seems like she's continuing to nurture her kitchen garden.

After a break for a meal, we continued to review the studies. Originally I wasn't good at studying and there is no way I would like something I'm bad at. But I was able to concentrate when studying with Sayuri and felt like my head was more willing to understand everything. Somehow, it was fun.

Notes and References

↑ An old-type wig once used by Geisha's and the like.

25th of April, Thursday

Facing forward. Empty. Curry pot.

Right before I left the classroom after school ended I've been stopped with a "Wait." by Mariko.

It looked like she had something she needed to ask me no matter what.

Why the hell was she so formal? I put on a guard just in case, however, her question was just "Is there anything in particular you would like to eat?".

She's been always treating me to boxed launches, I couldn't be grateful enough just for that.

That's why as long as it was not something strange, I would welcome any side dishes in the boxed launch. After I answered like that, she responded with "I don't mean a boxed lunch.".

So what I wanted to eat other than boxed lunches, huh?

After being told that, I couldn't think of anything, and told her that's the case. Then, for some reason I've been taken to supermarket on the way home.

Maybe she's been asked to do shopping for dinner. While I was looking at the ingredients as I passed by them, I considered things I'd like to eat.

Hmm. I can't think of anything. I could only image things only someone skilled at cooking could do... and it became even harder to think of something.

As I was waiting for Mariko with a basket in my hand, a mail came and my smartphone rang.

It was from Yuuki. She wrote that she'll be late today and to wait for her in the room... eh.

It's been quite a while since I went home and was alone. That's somehow lonely... and, when I thought that I realized. Yuuki had her own school life, and that I was convinced was natural for me to meet her soon after that.

I wonder how late she'll be. If it was just five minutes, she wouldn't bother sending a mail. Considering she contacted me as not to make me worry, it felt as if she was not to come back at all.

While I was looking at the fresh food corner, an inspiration appeared in my head.

I'll make a meal for Yuuki today. If it's curry then I should be able to do it without practice, I won't fail... probably.

I started to collect ingredients for curry in my basket.

And when I did so, Mariko saw the ingredients and asked if I want to eat curry. I wonder how did she know that, I only put a leek, carrots and potatoes and still haven't bought curry roux.

Mariko let out a small sigh. Certainly, curry couldn't be put in a boxed lunch. As she said that to me, she looked somehow lonely.

Oh, that's right. The reason I came with her to supermarket was to consider what I wanted to eat. With my thoughts preoccupied by curry, I could no longer think of anything else.

In the end, to take it all home and prepare it I bought ingredients for salad and curry.

Mariko got worried over the fact that I bought a large amount of ingredients, but I told her that I plan to freeze part of it and somehow managed to convince her.

Then Mariko advised me "It's better if beginners don't try putting any hidden taste in the curry.".

There were things like soy roux, peanuts butter, chocolate or instant coffee which could be added as secret ingredient but putting too much of it would cause the dish to fail. It should be fine with just making it with stable taste of roux that was available for purchase.

Even if one were not to put anything unnecessary, there was one more option to try being bolder. I ambiguously thought.

Although I said "I'm back.", the other person wasn't there.

Yuuki's room seemed strangely deserted. Just because there was no sight of her in the living room, a hole in my chest started gaping as my loneliness raged.

It was lonely to be alone. Now that I think about it, every day someone is waiting for me.

Ever since the first weekend of this life began, I was finally alone for the first time I was alone... now that I thought about it, I couldn't believe it.

I wondered if Yuuki will come back soon. No, Yuuki has her own life, I can't become a burden to her.

Bear with it, me. There's something to do before Yuuki comes back isn't there.

I borrowed the coffee apron that was in Yuuki's kitchen and rolled up the sleeves of my shirt.

All right! Let's do it!

There was unexpectedly many cooking utensils in there, they were all neatly prepared in Yuuki's kitchen.

The fact that there was a peeler was a fortunate miscalculation. Thanks to that I was able to safely peel the potatoes which were most difficult ones to peel.

Then I cooked the rice. I've helped Granny before with that much.

I thought that Yuuki only ate frozen foods, but it seemed like she properly cooked rice. After putting the rice in the rice cooker I pressed the start button.

I did as it said on the curry roux's package and cooked it.

After putting vegetables in the water I boiled it. I picked off the scum from inside and cooked it on low fire for a while.

As I did that, before long a nostalgic smell started to fill the kitchen.

A curry or stew, it was at a point where I didn't know what it'll become, but I loved the smell that rose from the pot.

As I continued to stare at the pot in the kitchen, I was suddenly hugged from behind.

"Nii-san, be my bride!"

"U-UWAAaaaaaaaaa!"

As I screamed in surprise, the person who hugged me from behind was also surprised and fell down.

It seemed like I saw something white peek out from below the fluttering skirt.

I quickly directed my line of sight towards her face.

"S-sorry Nii-san!"

"Don't scare me like that. I thought my heart would stop."

I reached out to her with my hand. Yuuki took it and stood up, truly she's a little sister who's tall and well proportioned like a model.

She was wearing a skirt. As well as a middle school uniform.

"It seems like you're able to wear a skirt now, Yuuki."

"Y-yeah. It's thanks to Nii-san and everyone else. Wearing a maid outfit on Saturday last week was a good experience."

As she said that, Yuuki picked up the tip her skirt and raised it. I spat out a sigh.

"But, I was able to go outside while wearing a skirt, and had to do my best to go to school like that... there's more of training for me as a girl to do."

Yuuki released the tip of the skirt with an unconcerned smile.

She was a little sister who was boyish in a different way than Tomomi was. Although she's been cross-dressing up until now, after meeting with me she started aiming to raise her girl power and underwent a special training.

After putting in a lot of effort, in this short time she's grown enough to wear a skirt.

But it seemed like on top of wearing a skirt, going in it to a school was quite difficult for her.

She tilted her head in wonder as she gazed at the pot on the stove.

"Nii-san, can it be that you can cook?"

"Yeah. This is not a chemical experiment. The plan is to make something that can be eaten, so don't worry."

"Is it a curry? Or maybe a white stew?"

"It's curry!"

Yuuki's pupils started sparkling.

"Yesss!! I love curry. Why does Nii-san know my favourite food?"

"If it's my cute little sister then I can tell. At least that's what I would like to say. It was just a coincidence. It's just that I'm a completely novice at cooking and since I didn't want to fail, I decided to make curry you know?"

She raised her voice slightly.

"Even if it's a coincidence, I'm happy! This must be a destiny Nii-san."

The innocence she displays from time to time makes me worried as her brother.

As Yuuki continued to jump in joy, I asked her to wait in the living room.

After the ingredients in the pot were cooked enough, I put in the roux and stopped the fire under it all at once. When the curry powder has completely dissolved, I slowly stirred it on low fire.

With perfect timing, the rice also finished cooking.

I washed the tomatoes and lettuce with water and cut it making into a salad.

I sat by the table together with Yuuki. As we ate a meal together, I was really happy. Even more so, considering the fact that we ate the food that I made.

After parting with Grandpa and Granny, the current situation didn't allow me to realize how lonely it is to eat alone. Thanks to my meeting with the little sisters and eating together with them, the loneliness was blown away.

Today, I noticed it because Yuuki wasn't here, what a sorry guy I am.

The curry I prepared has a stable and delicious taste to the point I can't believe myself... is what I thought. Yuuki as well, has been happily eating it.

"Nii-san! What kind of hidden taste is in this curry?"

"Love... I guess."

Yuuki's face turned red up to her ears. She ate the curry in no time.

"C-can I have seconds?"

"Sure. Eat all you want."

Being asked for seconds... made me very happy. Can it be that cooking becomes a habit because of a nice feelings like this? As long as there are people who would gladly eat your cooking.

Looks like this is something to be very, very happy about.

After the meal Yuuki started washing the dishes. Although I one-sidedly decided to prepare it on my own and should have done it, she took the initiative.

The remaining curry was portioned into small tupperware and frozen to be reheated at later time.

Yuuki smiled while sipping a coffee after the meal in the living room.

"I'd wish everyone ate Nii-san's curry. It was very delicious."

Since I just prepared it according to recipe, it will be troubling if she raises the bar that high...

When I glanced at the clock in the room, it was already 8 p.m. in the evening.

I calmly confirmed it with Yuuki.

"Hey, Yuuki. Won't you become my little sister?"

"That's... no can do, Nii-san."

"So you too?"

"Yeah. If I become Nii-san's little sister, I'll surely get spoiled."

"It's okay to be spoiled. Relying on each other is part of what it means to be family."

"I too want to become a respectable person who is able to say such things."

She stared me with unconditional respect. I'm not such a respectable person. Yuuki overestimates me. I... I'm someone who is all talk and can't do anything when it comes to it.

"That's why I have decided, when I become more independent I will once again ask you to become my Onii-chan."

So that's Yuuki's 'Shall I make you older brother!?' huh?

I felt it was a little bit similar to Tomomi's. But in Yuuki's case these feelings were a little bit more natural. Rather than 'Let's compete against each other!', it's more like wanting to slowly grow. That's how it seemed to me.

As I looked at Yuuki, she started to squirm and fidget.

"N-Nii-san! It's all true!"

"No no, I'm not doubting you. But is there any other reason for that?"

"T...tt-there's no way there is!"

So... there is.

Because of Yuuki 'that possibility' has become more likely.

"Hey Yuuki. Selene, Tomomi and Sayuri... neither of them will become my little sisters... can it be that you're doing it so that I pick Mika?"

"...umm, please don't ask any more!"

Seeing her make a troubled expression, I was reminded of the chat I had with Selene. It seemed like there was no 'secret' meeting between the little sisters.

Everyone might have decided by themselves for Mika's sake. I don't know what Mika herself thinks of that though...

Anyway, it's better not to trouble Yuuki any more than this.

"Got it. Um, do you want a report on the current situation from me?"

"Yup. What will become of us?"

"On Tuesday I went together with Tomomi to Murasaki-san's room. But she didn't tell me anything important. I think that this weekend, we will be gathered once again to listen to her announcement."

"I see. Depending on the contents of the announcement, there's a chance we might be separated."

"I don't know whether it's possible or not, but I want to stay together with everyone. I will relay these feelings to her."

"It'll be fine Nii-san. I'm sure it will turn out well."

Although she was anxious earlier, now she made a smile. Seeing that expression made my heart skip a beat. It was a smile which warmed the recipient's heart, like gentle spring sunshine.

"Thank you Yuuki. I feel better now."

I wasn't facing forward, I was pulling down everyone else who did.

She made me notice such an important thing.

Even if we were to be separated, we can connect each other if we'd like to... hey! At a time like this we can use that.

It seems like STRING which I've been taught how to use by Mariko will prove helpful here.

"Oh right, do you know about STRING?"

She tilted her head puzzled, still having a smile on her face.

"E-ehm, what's that?"

Yuuki spoke in monotone voice again. It seemed like she knows about it but pretended not to know. If she wants it that way, then I'll play along.

Little sisters have their own privacy. Were I to continue insist on it, I would be an older brother with no delicacy at all.

"No, if you don't know then that's fine."

Suddenly, Yuuki stood up.

"Nii-san, want a refill?"

Before I noticed, my coffee cup was already empty. I asked for plenty of milk and sugar. By the way, today too Yuuki was drinking black.

Concerned about the future, I asked her and confirmed about a lot of things.

"By the way, did something happen to you in school today?"

"Yeah. Actually... there was a club activities tour."

"But Yuuki's a third year, right?"

Normally the third years concentrate on their exams and retire from clubs. Did she really intend on joining a club?

"I-it was really just a tour, I only looked. I don't intend on joining any club."

Yuuki turned away from me and her eyebrows lowered. Looking more closely, I noticed that her eyes were wandering around. There were waves on the surface of coffee in the cup she held. You're trembling too much!

"What's wrong? Did too much coffee hurt your stomach? Want me to rub it?"

"You'll do it if my stomach hurts?! Nii-san, I... will drink. I will keep on drinking coffee until it hurts!"

"You don't have to! So that means it doesn't hurt right?"

"N-no it doesn't. And even if it would it's not a big deal."

Her eyes started to wander around even faster. For a while now she hasn't looked in my direction.

"Are you trying to keep something in secret from me?"

bikun... Yuuki's shoulders jerked.

Just how easy is it to see through her? Yuuki's really honest.

"If you're fine with that, you can consult it with me."

"U-uu... i-in fact... it's about the club tour..."

I asked and then went silent, she continued in a low voice.

"The tour... or rather, peeping..."

I guessed it already. But I continued to listen until the end.

"What do you mean by peeping?"

"I-I'm a third year, it would be outrageous for me to join a club."

"Ehm... what kind of club you peeped on?"

"That's, the tea ceremony club; flower arrangement club; handicrafts club as well as cooking club."

"All of them are clubs which would increase your girl power aren't they."

"I wanted to study more on how to be a girl... but all club members are girls... and it was difficult to speak with them."

Just by going to school in a skirt all the strength was drained from Yuuki, and yet she aimed to increase her girl power even further.

However, it seemed she felt guilty over voyeurism, the smile she encouraged me with earlier disappeared completely.

I nodded in agreement.

"The third years usually retire in order to prepare for the exams. Although the sport-type clubs generally do it after the summer competitions. But for cultural-type clubs to have a third year join them in early spring is a bit..."

"That's right Nii-san. That's why I looked from outside the window or listened in secret while staying beside the door... and then I thought I did something I shouldn't have..."

"It's all right. They surely would welcome you. Why don't you ask them properly if you can visit them?"

"Ehh?!"

"It will go well as long as you do it properly. Yuuki's a really good girl. There's nothing anyone would hate about you. However, I think it would be impossible for you to join the club, but why don't you ask them if they allowed you to visit? You can tell that you're trying to become more feminine."

"But that would be causing trouble for the club members, wouldn't it?"

"I think peeping as you are now is more suspicious. If it's you it'll definitely be all right. I think considering the circumstances you can give up on joining the club, you can't really do anything about it. Isn't that the main point?"

"Nii-san... I get it. I will do it."

Seeing her smile once again, naturally, I smiled as well.

With a refreshed expression, Yuuki stretched her back muscles. As she did that her chest was emphasized... not good. She's my little sister so why am I looking at her like that. I'm disqualified to be an older brother.

After she finished the stretch, she spoke shyly.

"I'm being spoiled by Nii-san after all."

"I-I just consulted something with you, calling that spoiling you..."

Tomomi's request for a lap pillow crossed my mind.

"Um, what is it Nii-san?"

"I-it's nothing."

"You're being weird."

She chuckled and continued like that.

"Can I ask you a question that can be considered being spoiled?"

"As long as I can answer it, then anything!"

"Umm, ehm... what would Nii-san do if I found a girlfriend?"

A blush appeared on her cheeks.

"A girlfriend huh? I guess that if you participate in club activities, the junior girls will probably fall for you at the first sight... hey, a girlfriend is no good! You've gone through all this trouble to be more girly after all."

"My girl power is still not sufficient for ascension. Then um... what if I found a boyfriend?"

I wonder why has she suddenly asked such a question. Does she want a boyfriend?

That's... not a bad thing... is it?

It's not a bad thing. It's a good thing. But somehow... it makes me feel uneasy.

I tried to advise Yuuki following the proper rationale as much as I could.

"Whether you find a boyfriend or not is your freedom, if that boy has acknowledged your girl power then that would make me glad as your brother."

Yuuki's eyes turned round and she nodded lightly.

"Y-yes. But Nii-san, just now it was talk about 'what if' only. It's a purely hypothetical situation!"

She denied it so desperately.

Can it be, that she came back late... because she meet with her boyfriend...?

"I-I see. It's only hypothetical."

"That's right Nii-san. Of course it is—. Ha ha ha ha."

Since Yuuki laughed while making an expression of a handsome guy, I couldn't help but to join her and laugh as well.

My little sisters eventually finding a boyfriend is something natural, why am I so... uneasy about it?

26th of April, Friday

Frowny. Worry. Secret Consultation.

With the weekend coming, the atmosphere in class has gotten pretty lively. Next Monday is a holiday since it's the Shōwa Day.

I have immersed myself in interacting with my little sisters and didn't realize a holiday has come until this morning. Speaking of which, the golden week. By then we, might already get separated, thinking that my mood somehow turned heavier.

To think that just the other day I was encouraged by Yuuki. My troubles appeared on my face and I ended up worrying Mariko as well.

After school, I returned to the mansion and visited the Room 201 on the second floor.

"Welcome back Nii-chama! Maple says welcome too!"

I replied with "I'm back" to Mika's innocent smile.

Maybe protecting Mika is the best thing to do after all.

Pulled by hand by Mika, I entered the living room. On top of the table was resting the piggy bank and the tablet. She made me sit down on the sofa.

"Nii-chama, is cocoa okay?"

"Ah, yeah. Thank you."

After placing Maple on top of a stool, Mika started to prepare cocoa filled with marshmallows.

When the cocoa was completed and she carried the tray to the living room, a *pikon!* sound came from my smartphone.

Mika stretched her hand towards the tablet on the table.

"Ehh? Nothing came!"

"It was my smartphone that rang."

"I seee. Mii-chan mistook it."

She stuck out her tongue, tilted her head and lightly poked her head. What a cute creature.

When I checked the smartphone, a notification saying there's a message was displayed on the screen. It was STRING's chat function. The one who sent the message was Mariko. Or rather, it's natural since Mariko was the only one I have ever registered. The content was something like "I'm waiting for the answer about homework".

I will decide during the weekend, please wait a little longer. I replied politely.

As I excused myself to Mariko, Mika raised her voice while watching my smartphone.

"This, Mii-chan knows it!"

"By 'this' you mean STRING?"

"Umm, you can talk through chat in it. The stamps are cute right."

So Mika has the STRING on her tablet? I might have overlooked it last time.

I wonder if Mika found and installed it on her own?

"Mika, did you have someone install STRING for you?"

"Yup. Nee-chama!"

Ahh, I see, Murasaki-san, huh? STRING is useful for Mika to contact her in case something had happened.

As I nodded convinced, Mika's face paled.

"W-w-wwwhat to do Nii-chama!"

"What do you mean, you okay, Mika?"

"Mii-chan was supposed to keep the app in secret from Nii-chama."

Oh, that's bad. I need to hurry up and fall down from the stairs to suffer a memory loss.

"I-I get it. I'll erase the memory."

"W-will you forget about Mii-chan and Maple?"

"I won't. The only thing I will forget is that Mika uses STRING.'

"That's great. I wondered what to do for a moment."

Relieved, with an expression that made it seem like she would cry, Mika made a powerless smile.

Let's change the topic to something else.

"U-umm, Mika. About the thing from last week..."

Damn, I touched upon a heavy topic unconsciously.

"Mii-chan is looking forward to tomorrow. Maple too is looking forward to sexually harassing Nee-chamas without limit."

"Hey hey Maple, restrain yourself. No, um..."

What Mika meant she looks forward to, was everyone gathering at my room, right.

"What is it, Nii-chama?"

I took a deep breath to prepare myself, and spoke to Mika who stared at me intensely.

"Mika... won't you become my little sister?"

"Nii-chama, no."

No? So Mika too has sentenced me to disqualification as an elder brother.

"Why is it a 'no'?"

"Nii-chama can't become only Mii-chan's Nii-chama. If Nii-chama becomes everyone's Nii-chama, Mii-chan will make you onii-chan!"

I thought as she smiled innocently.

'I'll make you my little sister'. These words could be seen as looking down on them. Saying 'won't you become', is just stating it in a different way.

Equality... is it. Mika is probably not aware of it. But 'I'll make you onii-chan' is a mirror-like inverse reflection born from my 'become my little sister'.

I wonder if everyone wants to make me their onii-chan... I think they do.

Before that, if they become independent of the Taishido's heritage case, and still want to make me their onii-chan, if everyone calls me 'onii-chan' then...

"Nii-chama's face is all frowny. Are you thinking something difficult?"

"Ah, umm. It's not difficult, I'm thinking too much that it's difficult or rather...it's nothing, Mika."

Mika's eyes moistened as she felt helpless and she cast down her gaze.

She stood up from her seat and whispered quietly into my ear.

"Umm umm... you need to keep this secret."

"Secret?"

"Nee-chama... Tomomi-neechama might disappear."

"Tomomi... will disappear?"

"Yup. But that's a secret. That's why, forget it Nii-chama."

"S-sure."

Jumping like a rabbit, Mika went back to her seat.

"Did you meet Tomomi?"

As I changed my expression thinking——made what Mika called 'frowny face', Mika slowly made a big nod.

"Tomomi-neechama made a boyfriend. It's a secret."

"H-haa?!"

As I let out a loud voice, Mika twitched in surprise.

"S-sorry Mika for startling you."

"Y-yup. Mii-chan was surprised too so Nii-chama being surprised is normal too. You see... if Nee-chama has a boyfriend, what do we do if she no longer needs us."

"I don't think Tomomi will say anything like that... but, a boyfriend huh. Well, Tomomi understands the boys' hobbies, and she's very spoiled in a very boyish way making a big gap moe, so it's no wonder even if she's popular... hahaha."

Mika continued with her head down.

"Mii-chan loves Tomomi-neechama. She teaches me games, is good at games and has biiig boobs!"

T-that's appealing. I didn't think Mika was into big boobs too.

"Since you love her so much, from a boy's perspective Tomomi must be super attractive too. Getting a boyfriend is a normal thing."

"But, but you see, Tomomi-neechama never went on a date with boyfriend. That's why she has a request for Nii-chama."

Suddenly, I recalled what Yuuki said yesterday.

What if by a chance his little sister got a boyfriend? No way, could it be about this?!

"What does Tomomi want me to do?"

"Tomomi-neechama said she wants to have a practice date. Nii-chama is qualified to do that. At first everyone was against it, but Sayuri-neechama said 『it's better if sisters cooperate』 and persuaded everyone."

So Sayuri encouraged Tomomi huh. In other words, she asks me after obtaining the approval of her little sisters.

"Then, if by chance I turned it down..."

I would have denied everyone's feelings.

"Mii-chan doesn't know what to do. Maple said that it's ten years early for Nii-chama to go on a date with Tomomi-neechama, but if Nii-chama doesn't do it then Tomomi-neechama might disappear, but, if Tomomi-neechama becomes master in dating she might flirt with her boyfriend. And Mii-chan with others will be neglected?"

Mika looked at me sadly. It looked like she really was worried. She hoped for Tomomi to be happy, but was also anxious she might disappear, there were many feelings inside of her small chest.

I stood up and gently embraced sitting Mika from the left side.

"Tomomi definitely won't forget about Mika, and will not neglect you."

"Really?"

"Yeah. Even if Tomomi found a boyfriend, the relationship of us siblings won't change at all."

When I gently released Mika's body, immediately Mika herself has hugged me instead.

"Yup! That's right! Mii-chan's feeling better again. Thank you Nii-chama!"

Mika clung to me closely, smiling.

However... Tomomi has a boyfriend huh. When we met on Tuesday she didn't do anything to practice... what kind a guy is that boyfriend of hers? If he's a weird guy I need to properly protest it as her brother... hey, I can't just go and spill the fact that I know. I shouldn't.

Still, why am I this upset by this?

27th of April, Saturday

Everyone. Gathering. Deadline.

On the Saturday, the room 701 was busy since the morning.

The little sisters have come to the room all together.

This time everyone wasn't dressed in maid outfit cosplay, they all had their plain clothes. I wasn't really... expecting anything. Seeing they aren't the little sister maid troop, I was relieved.

Selene's clothes were very gothic. As usual, the gap between normal clothes for wearing inside room and hers was large.

Mika was in lolita clothes. As I thought, probably the one choosing clothes for her was Murasaki-san?

Tomomi was wearing boyish shorts, it suited her activeness well.

Even if she's got a boyfriend, she won't change the way she's dressing in just a day or two, will she. But, I wonder if she's gonna change the way she's dressing herself to fit her boyfriend's tastes.

Yuuki was in her classic style of a T-shirt and jeans. It seemed like she would seem stylish no matter what she wore. I felt like giving her a ban on wearing jeans in order to make her get used to wearing skirts.

With that said though, if I forced her into a skirt she might panic, so for now I'll just look after her as she acts independently.

As for Sayuri, she wasn't wearing the wig and appeared in a cute one-piece dress today.

Not too flashy and quite neat, I felt it was a choice that gave her a lot of feminine refinement.

And that Sayuri had worn an apron and immediately got to preparing for breakfast. Yuuki voluntarily helped her with it.

Selene and Mika together started watching anime on cable TV.

While yawning, Tomomi begun to arrange dishes on the table.

"Hey, Nii-chan help out too, c'mon on! Those who don't work won't eat!"

It was the usual Tomomi.

"What about those two?"

The two lined up were absorbed in watching the TV. The program was about a transforming heroine. Tomomi smiled with satisfaction.

"Selene is collecting data and it's emotional education for Mika so it's all right. Rather than that, aren't you hoarding laundry to do, Nii-chan?"

After finishing putting out dishes and glasses for a number of people, with a brisk pace Tomomi headed towards the washing machine in the bathroom.

I went along Tomomi. It was easier to ask when it's just us two.

As she stood in front of the drum-type washing machine with softener and detergent in her hands "Hmm. There's two of them, which one is which?", wondering, I spoke.

"H-hey, Tomomi."

"Ah! Good timing Nii-chan. Where do I put each of these?"

"The liquid detergent goes here, as for softener, you need to pull here so that the tray comes out and put it inside."

"Thanks!"

When the washing machine started turning, Tomomi turned around and looked into my face.

"So, what's up Nii-chan? Can it be, unable to hug me you've gotten lonely and waited for us to be alone?"

"N-no!"

"Then whaaat is it. Be honesst."

"Umm... right.... that's... uh..."

I couldn't continue. Is it true that you got a boyfriend? If I were to say that all of a sudden Tomomi will obviously get suspicious.

Who did you hear that from? When it comes to that, it'll be more than bad.

Tomomi made a blank look on her face.

"What is it Nii-chan?"

I hurriedly pointed towards the washing machine.

"Oh right! If you push this button for drying function, it'll be done automatically."

"Oh! Sorry 'bout that, forgot to press it."

After that, Tomomi still continued to look at my face.

"So, that's not all is it?"

"N-nothing really... but, let me apologize first."

"Can't be helped. It were some stormy days lately."

Tomomi laughed indifferently. Was she... not angry?

"U-umm... did something change recently?"

"Changed?"

Staring at me intently, Tomomi suddenly clung onto me. She pressed her bulging chest against me. Soft. When I was in close contact wtih Tomomi, there was an indescribable good scent.

"H-hey! What it all of a sudden..."

"Nii-chan, if you raise your voice everyone will come, right?"

I responded while suppressing my voice.

"Don't threaten me. Please let go!"

"But it's Nii-chan who asked if something had changed."

"And I wonder, what does that have to do with hugging me?"

"A lot. I've become bigger recently. Of course, I didn't get fat though!"

"Got it. I understand. I have understood."

"Very well."

Smiling satisfactory, Tomomi finally let go of me.

As I was relieved, a presence had appeared behind me. When feeling chill I turned around, Sayuri's figure with an apron on stood there.

"Oh my, so Onii-sama was in a place like this?"

We were seen?!! With a dry smile, Sayuri spoke monotonously. It felt like she was clearly suppressing her anger.

Tomomi listened to it with a smile.

"What's up, Sayuri?"

"The breakfast has been prepared. You two, please do come."

As if to counter Tomomi's smile, Sayuri said that also with a smile and soundlessly left towards the dining room.

"C'mon, let's go Nii-chan."

Tomomi took my hand, with my mouth half-opened feeling like nearly half of my soul was drained I was dragged down the hallway.

The breakfast consisted of a croissant, scrambled eggs, boiled sausage and pumpkin potage. Also, to the menu there was a mini salad and vegetable juice.

All of it was delicious.

While eating, Tomomi had casually started talking with me.

"Nii-chan. By the way... I've made a boyfriend."

I know already. I couldn't say that. As I made an absent-minded look Tomomi puffed up her cheeks and pursed her lips.

"What's this. It's fine if you act more shocked you know."

"N-no, it's nothing. Sorry."

"If you apologize you'll make me troubled."

"T-then, congratulations!"

"Thanks, Nii-chan."

"It doesn't seem... like it's the first time others hear it."

"Yup. I already reported to everyone so Nii-chan is the last one. I didn't really intend to surprise you though. I'll be 16 in the summer as well, you know? It's just right that I get a boyfriend or two."

"You shouldn't be gettin' two!"

"I'm just talking hypothetically."

I looked around the table. Selene made a sleepy expression with half-closed eyes, as if it didn't concern her. Sayuri was squirming, it seemed like she was trying to put up with something.

Yuuki looked towards Mika worried. Speaking of Mika, she was in low spirits. For Mika, it seemed like a grave problem.

Tomomi continued towards me.

"And so, I have a request for Nii-chan..."

When Tomomi had come down to the main issue, the chime had rang out.

"Sorry Tomomi. It seems we have a visitor."

There was only one person I knew that could have visited. Tomomi's shoulders drooped. Selene's half-opened eyes opened wide. Sayuri had become even more anxious, Yuuki... nodded towards me with a serious expression. Mika stared at me intently.

"It's probably Murasaki-san."

After I went up to the intercom and unlocked the door, Murasaki-san had appeared in the dining room wearing a suit. Everyone stood up.

"My apologies for appearing during the meal."

With that as the lead-in, Murasaki-san confirmed with me.

"Were you able to decide on a single little sister?"

"I won't choose."

"Is that so..."

"I'll give up on the inheritance. That's what happens unless I make my choose before the deadline, isn't it?"

"Yes, it's as Yoichi-san says."

"The deadline... has passed already, hasn't it?"

Everyone including me awaited Murasaki-san's next words. She sighed lightly and without a single move of her eyebrow, she spoke indifferently.

"No."

"Does that mean the deadline hasn't passed?"

"That's how it would be."

"Then, why was it said that it's two weeks? Was it in fact a longer period of time?"

"I was the one who determined it to be two weeks."

"Was that too, in the testament?"

"That's... yes."

For a moment, Murasaki-san was speechless. As if she hesitated.

"When does the real deadline come?"

"I cannot respond with anything concerning the will... however."

Murasaki-san spoke to me with a look colder than ice.

"I recommend that you choose soon... so that you don't regret it afterwards."

"Regret... you say."

"None of the little sister candidates have a right of veto. Yoichi-san's decision is absolute. Do not forget that."

"I... won't choose."

A regret after choosing just one person and regret after losing the inheritance. Normally, the regret would be greater after losing the latter.

"Is that so. Well then, excuse me."

After a short apology Murasaki-san left. The tense atmosphere relaxed all at once.

I exhaled grandly and muttered.

"What was that... 'regret', she says."

During her today's visit she gave off even more business-like impression. Also, since it seemed like she had gone as far as to threaten, it felt suspicious.

As I thought, to Murasaki-san, the relationship with us was ultimately dictated by work, till the end she strictly intended on fulfilling the contract with her client.

The little sisters sat again in their respective seats.

Tomomi awkwardly muttered.

"U-um, Nii-chan, don't mind it!"

"Don't mind you say... I wonder, have I done anything wrong? Or is my existence in itself bad?"

Sayuri shook her head sideways.

"The asking something essential you are unable to answer to, was Murasaki-san. Onii-sama isn't at fault."

Yuuki repeatedly nodded to that.

"T-that's right, Nii-san. I'm not good with difficult stuff, but I'd say we should act optimistically."

Mika hugged Maple tightly.

"Is it okay for Mii-chan and others to stay together for longer?"

I slowly nodded in response to Mika's words.

"Yeah. It seems all right."

Still, being told "if you don't choose soon you'll regret it", I felt restless.

Then Selene murmured with a clear voice. Her pupils were hollow, as if she was looking at something we were unable to see, she had a mysterious look.

"...Onii-chan. Is there really a deadline?"

"Deadline, huh. Judging by what Murasaki-san said, I guess there is."

Selene nodded demurely in response to my words.

"...the reason...you have to choose is...."

As if time stopped, Selene stopped moving. Worried about her, I asked.

"I have to choose because?"

"...*suu*.....*suu*...eh? Good morning, Onii-chan."

Selene rubbed her eyes with a large yawn. Can it be that she was half-asleep?

Sayuri pinched her small chin with fingers and opened her mouth.

"We were unable to find out was it that the selection is done as soon as possible. It feels like it would be difficult to elicit it from Murasaki-san."

Tomomi flared up with a smile.

"Well then, let's enjoy our current life until we're evicted!"

It was a pessimistic way to be positive about it, but she had a point.

No, can I let myself be swept by this recognition?

As I was astray, Tomomi continued brightly.

"So, back to the previous talk... can I request something from Nii-chan?"

With Murasaki-san's appearance Tomomi was interrupted, wasn't it. Once again I turned towards her.

"Speaking of which, we were in middle of a conversation. But let me declare ahead. I'll listen to the request... but I can't grant one that is beyond what I can do."

"You can do it! Go go, it's all right! Nii-chan... go on a date with me!"

"W-why?"

"You know, before going on the real thing with my boyfriend I want to practice. Seems like there's still time until the deadline for choosing a little sister, it's a request from your cute little sister, you'll listen to it right?"

I checked on Sayuri's expression. It was meek. I felt she would be first one to oppose it, but it seems like it was truth that she was cooperating with Tomomi.

Sayuri noticed my gaze and smiled.

"It's Tomomi-san's earnest wish. Please grant it Onii-sama. Even more so that the time is finite. I wish for the happiness of my sisters. If each of them find a boyfriend, I shall give them my utmost support."

As Sayuri declared that with a smile, I felt my spine tremble.

Were to Selene, Yuuki, Mika find boyfriends and Sayuri was unable to get one...

I was drawn to Sayuri's view on future prospects, wouldn't it mean Sayuri and I are left alone together?

It's no wonder that she wasn't angry when coming across what could be called Tomomi and mine's secret meeting.

Hearing Sayuri's declaration tears appeared in Mika's eyes.

"I see. Mii-chan's thinking was shallow. Sayuri-neechama wanted Tomomi-neechama to be happy. Mii-chan respects Sayuri-neechama a lot."

Hearing Mika innocently say she respects her, Sayuri just for a moment made an uncomfortable expression, then with mild humility responded.

"Of course, we're sisters. We are a family after all... hahaha."

In response to Sayuri's dry smile Yuuki put up a troubled expression. Selene remained absent-minded.

Tomomi peeked into my face and leaned over the table.

"So, Nii-chan, will you cooperate?"

"G-got it. I'll try. I'll do it! Let me help!"

As long as my little sisters are close to me and want something, I'd like to grant it all to them.

"By the way, where do you want to go on a date? Near the station?"

"Nii-chan's still naive. A date on home-ground won't cut it. Since we're doing it, let's try challenging a high-difficulty map."

"A high-difficulty map you say... is there even difficulty on dates?"

"Well, there are even those too difficult to clear. Still, if we win in a major city I'll gain confidence. I think it's worth trying. If I surpass that difficult place, I'll be able to enjoy a date in any city! You see."

I wonder if dates are the same thing as games to her.

"And where's that major city?"

Tomomi swiftly pointed at the ceiling.

"It's Shibuya, Nii-chan."

"B-by Shibuya you mean, that Shibuya with Hachiko statue?"

"That's right Nii-chan. It's a holy land of dates, right? Don't you want to go on a pilgrimage there?"

I've never been in Shibuya. From the image I have, it vaguely feels like a scary place.

"Well, Nii-chan can leave it to me, you just have to get on the boat and enjoy it. I've already thought of a route for capturing. Also, in case we're in a pinch Selene will navigate us."

When I turned towards Selene, she nodded twice.

"...I'll provide support from the room."

"O-ohh. Thanks Selene. So, when are we going?"

"Tomorrow, Nii-chan! Strike while iron is hot, they say."

I once again looked at my little sisters. Mika held Maple in both her hands and raised it in a "banzai" gesture.

"Mii-chan wants to go on a date too! With Maple's company!"

In response to Mika's voice, Sayuri nodded.

"We'll accompany you tomorrow. Of course, we'll take distance and tail you as not to bother you two."

Hurriedly, Yuuki opened her mouth.

"I-I'll come as well. In Shibuya there are famous clothing and brand stores, it'd feel like I could raise my girl power."

And like that, it turned out that I... am going to go with my little sister Tomomi on a date tomorrow.

Since then, the Saturday had passed as if nothing happened.

Everyone together played a game Tomomi had brought, watched TV and also looked up on how to access Shibuya on the smartphone.

We finished a meal in the evening, then each of us entered the bath and did their preparations for tomorrow. Once again, all the siblings have entered that large bed.

I wondered if that's all I could do.

About Tomomi's boyfriend and the "regret" remark of Murasaki-san's. As I felt very anxious, the night had grown late on us.

28th of April, Sunday

Practice. Date. First Experience.

Half past nine, Sunday.

When I woke up and raised from the bed, Selene was sitting on the bed's side.

Selene said that currently, Tomomi was in another room in the middle of preparations for going out.

While there was still some time remaining, I was told to prepare and leave ahead to Shibuya.

I said I'll wait until Tomomi finishes preparing, but I was chased out by Selene in the middle of it.

When I was leaving the room 701, Selene passed a secret pouch to me. It was a cutely pink, floral item. Honestly, carrying that around was a little embarrassing.

But, apparently "something important" was inside.

Use it when you're in trouble... she said, but also gave me instructions not to open it until it's to be used. Be careful and don't hurry, so you don't have to use this if possible, in other words it was something for my and Tomomi's sake... apparently.

I wonder what is it. Being told not to open makes me even more curious.

Despite curiosity, I have put away the pouch in the shoulder bag I had. It won't stand out inside.

I told "I'm off." to Selene for a goodbye and went towards the nearest station to ride a bus.

It hasn't passed a month since I came to this city, but I'm getting more and more familiar with the scenery seen through the bus' window. Still, it's been a while since I've gone out on Sunday.

In a word, it could be said that Shibuya is "wide", leaving where to go to Tomomi made me worried. However, if I checked up on the dating spots here and there it would be no practice to her.

While thinking about that I got off the bus and took a private railway, changing into JR line halfway... at 10 o'clock I arrived in Shibuya's Hachikō statue.

People, people, more people. What a large number of people. The square in front of Hachikō statue was synonymous with meeting place, it was really busy. Doesn't getting to rejoin with someone here require you to wade through a wave of people? Makes me think it's really inefficient.

The square in front of Hachikō was shown in the morning news through a live camera, a five-road junction.

People continuously accumulated on the edge of the side-walk and as soon as the pedestrian signal turned green, they filled intersection like a wave. As everyone walked in their respective direction, it seemed like a smooth travelling back and forth. I'm amazed they don't bump at each other.

Were Selene to come to a place like this, she would faint.

"Yo! Nii-chan, did you wait?"

Ten minutes past 11. A voice called out towards my back as I looked towards the intersection.

It's been only ten minutes, she should have come to Shibuya together with me.

Ah, this "did you wait?" exchange might be an indispensable part of dating.

"Um, I just came here."

As I turned around while saying the classic line, there, was Tomomi in her usual rough get-up... not.

「失礼だなにーちゃん。
あたしだって本気をだせば、
これくらいちょちょいの
ちょいだってのの」
白のブラウスに春らしい
淡いピンクのスカート姿だった。
ブラウスにはレースがあしらわれていて、
胸元を黒いリボンタイで留めてある。
足は素足にパンプスだけど、
ピンクのラメ入りのペディキュアをしていた。
これは結構時間がかかってるな。
俺が寝坊している間も、
ずっと準備してたんだろう。
振り返ると、そこには
いつものラフな格好の友美が
……いなかった。
「お、お前……友美か？」

"Y-you... are you Tomomi?"

"That's rude Nii-chan. Even for me, when I'm serious this much is a walk in the park."

Her appearance was one in a white blouse and a pale pink skirt. The blouse was decorated with lace and tied on her chest, was a black ribbon.

She had pumps on her bare feet, but also sparkling pink pedicure.

This would take quite a while. Even as I overslept, she was preparing meanwhile.

Her fingernails were also perfect.

Normally she didn't use cosmetics... well, I don't think she had to force herself but... I could sense femininity unthinkable of Tomomi.

With her eyelashes raised her eyes looked beautiful, her cheeks were pale pink... are those natural finishing touches Sayuri's work?

Tomomi slowly raised and lowered her shoulders.

"Well, kinda. Make-up takes time."

"Did you do it yourself?"

"No way. Make-up was done by Sayuri. I asked Selene for the clothes. I borrowed shoes from Sayuri, apparently our size is close. Really a pain, the woman's clothes."

"After getting this cute, the person herself shouldn't be saying it's 'a pain'."

"A-are you saying the usual Tomomi-chan isn't cute?!"

Blushing, angry, Tomomi laughed. Without any strength in it she formed fists with both her hands and hit my chest. Was she embarrassed?

When I looked there, there were three people peeking out from the seats behind Hachikō. It was Sayuri, Yuuki and Mika. Mika was carrying Maple like a backpack. When our eyes met, the three of them swiftly pulled back.

It seems like they were serious about inspecting today's date training. Apparently Selene was receiving reports from Sayuri in charge of surveillance and sent over helpful data.

A mail had immediately arrived to my smartphone.

デートの練習中 in 渋谷
太子堂陽一
たいしどう よういち
妹が5人もできたお兄ちゃん。
5月17日生まれの15歳。
日村友美
ひむら ともみ
妹候補その2。
8月4日生まれの15歳。
高校1年生。勝負バカ。
田宮世霊音
たみや せれね
妹候補その1。
10月1日生まれの12歳。
中学1年生。ニート っ子。

"That'd be from Selene. Let's see... this is the second Hachikō statue, the previous one wasn't facing the station."

"Feels like information copy-pasted from the net, Nii-chan."

"W-well, it's fine isn't it. Umm... when there's no topic to talk about during a date, this kind of trivia can sprout up a topic."

There was a postscript in the mail just now, Selene apparently knows our position from the GPS function of the smartphone... it said. Mika and others as well as Selene were able to grasp out position. It seemed possible to re-join with them were they to lose us.

Tomomi turned around with a twirl on spot.

"Uhaa! As I thought, skirts are really breezy."

"You're wearing a skirt when you go to the high school, right?"

"Mainly, a jersey. My high school isn't all that fussy about it."

"I-I see. Speaking of which, are you in any kind of club?"

"Were there to be a game club, I'd take them to the nationals."

"That's a shame."

"I-I don't need club activities to play games. Well, 'bout time we go Nii-chan?"

"Where are we going first?"

"U-umm..."

A mail from Selene had come.

"Shibuya seems to be a city of hills. A lot of them have their own names, it says."

As we walked from the Hachikō square towards the intersection, Tomomi next to me nodded.

"Umm, if I'm not wrong there's Miyamasuzaka, Dougenzaka, Spanishzaka and even Organzaka."

"Hee. You're quite knowledgeable, Tomomi."

"W-well."

When the pedestrian light changed to green, side by side we started walking towards the opposite side.

Once in front of a book store, Tomomi stopped. There was the city centre on the right and 009 on the left. The Maru-kuu's name is really famous. It was a

really famous place in Shibuya even I knew, there's a lot of stores with girl's clothes there.

As for the city centre, it felt like not just girl's clothes but also other stores would be there.

"So, where are we going?'

"I-it's Maru-kuu of course. You know, the girls' holy land."

Both of them would be busy, but I was sure Tomomi would like to go to the city centre's area.

"Let's go then."

"W-wait a moment! Nii-chan, c-can we... hold hands for a little bit?"

"We aren't children, we're not going to get lost are we."

"That's not it! T-this is a date."

デートの練習 尾行中
大隈美佳
おおくま みか
妹候補その3。
11月15日生まれの11歳。
小学6年生。天真爛漫。
三島小百合
みしま さゆり
妹候補その5。
6月14日生まれの13歳。
中学2年生。マニュアル人間。
立花優希
たちばな ゆうき
妹候補その4。
12月2日生まれの14歳。
中学3年生。女の子が苦手。

While saying so Tomomi snuggled up to me. After matching our hands she put her fingers between mine, intertwining them.

It was even closer than just joining hands, it felt like holding them. My fingers felt ticklish.

"I-isn't this a little bit too much contact?"

"There's lots of people here so it's all right! And we won't get lost like this."

Eh? Was it measures against getting lost after all?

"Right? It's all right isn't it, Nii-chan."

Seeing the spoiled look in her eyes I inadvertently nodded.

We slowly walked through the side-walk. When we arrived in front of a pharmacy named with a person's name, we ended up at a three-way intersection. The road in front of us could be likened to an Y character. On the branching point from which the road forked, there was a towering Maru-kuu's building.

"Somehow the atmosphere turned really trendy over here, hasn't it Nii-chan."

Looks fun... not really, Tomomi braced herself as she looked up at the silver tower. And then the heavenly voice... rather, a mail from Selene had come.

"Apparently, it's a good idea to go to the upper floor in the elevator and then go down by escalator."

And when I spoke the conquering strategy aloud, I turned my head to look behind us. I wonder, is it all right to drag Mika around such a centre? But despite my worries, Mika was walking hand in hand beside Yuuki with a smile. For now, both Yuuki and Mika seemed all right.

Sayuri's and mine eyes met. Today, she was in quite plain attire.

When our eyes met she laughed troubled. That moment, my ear was pulled strongly.

"Nii-chan, looking away is a taboo. Look at Tomomi-chan more."

"Y-yeah. Sorry. I was a little worried about Mika."

"Sayuri's lookin' after her ain't she."

"That was, well... 'I leave it to you' eye contact. Well then, let's go take a look."

Speaking of clothes, I always went with Granny to Shimomura, and sometimes even went to the Yunikura.

Maru-kuu was a completely unknown world to me.

We climbed up to the 8th floor immediately by elevator. Luckily Sayuri and others were able to get on an elevator too.

When we got on the 8th floor, I was surprised by the BGM. Female vocals in English were filling the floor. The electronic sounds were dazzling, despite being just a sound. Tomomi tightly held my hand, it was slightly sweaty.

"Nii-chan. It feels like enemy territory."

"Certainly. But it was Tomomi who decided to come here, let's have fun."

"Y-you're right. Umm..."

The 8th floor was a club-type... well, guess it's all right. Colour-wise, it seemed like a combination of black and pink.

The guys with bad looks around here were mainly FRIENDS!, I labelled them like that. It was my one-sided prejudice.

"Ah! Nii-chan, look look! It's Catie-chan-san!"

"Why would you put -san after -chan... hey, ohh. Certainly, this would warrant a -san be added."

Speaking of Catie-chan, it was an super-famous cat character, it was collaborating with various local items all over the country and famous artists but... it even fused with club-based fashion.

From the surveillance that was a certain distance away behind us, a yellow scream had rose.

"Waa! It's Catie-chan! So cute! Did you know? Maple call Catie-chan-san 'senpai'. Strange isn't it, how mysterious."

Mika's eyes sparkled. Tomomi's shoulders drooped.

"Seems like Mika's having more fun here."

I took a look around the floor.

"Do you have any clothes on mind? Rather than look at the store's shelves carefully, look at the mannequins on display, with 'this is good'! Kind of feeling, it seems."

This too was a second-hand advice received by mail from Selene.

"H-hmm. This kind of thing isn't to my liking I guess."

Tomomi raised her brows and laughed, troubled.

"Let's go to the next floor then."

"Y-yup."

Once again we held hands, Tomomi and I went down the escalator. That's when a mail arrived, it was from Yuuki.

"Let's see... Mika is crazy about Catie-chan, Yuuki is going to stay behind with her. From here on they'll act separately."

"I-isn't that fine?"

"Is it?"

"The surveillance is still properly attached to us. Mika and Yuuki can have their own date, kinda."

When I turned around, about five steps above us on the escalator, there was Sayuri.

"I wonder if it's all right for two girls to be alone."

"No problem as long as we rejoin them before it gets dark. After this we're going to walk around Shibuya, there's lot of hills here. If we drag Mika around with us she'll get exhausted, I'd feel sorry for her."

"Hmm, well, you might be right."

"It's enough that Nii-chan joins me shopping and gets exhausted."

Yuuki and Mika seem to be having fun, those two can have a breather so it's all right... huh. It's tough on Sayuri who's monitoring us though.

While I was thinking of that, we arrived at the seventh floor.

The seventh floor had an impression of a blue sky and sandy beaches. American west coast's casual style. Tomomi took a glance at the two stores in front as we got off the escalator and then we headed to the left to look at clothes in the stores.

She only looked at them but did not take any, when she sensed the customer service was about to come she quickly ran away.

"What is it Tomomi? If you like it, it's fine to look for a bit longer."

"H-hmm. I don't hate these kinds of clothes, but I don't feel like wanting them. Let's go to next one!"

I've heard that girl's shopping takes time, so this was anticlimactic.

When we went down to the sixth floor, Tomomi found an accessories store. It had all kinds of accessories like barrettes and bracelets. For a thing like this, it would be good to buy and put one on her.

Eh? Uhh... is it all right to give her a present? Even though it's just practice, it's still a date.

But, were I to do that it feels like Sayuri would storm in. She'd complain it's unfair for only Tomomi to get one.

Tomomi just went in and took a brief look. While I was pondering she already finished, isn't it kind of a waste after coming here?

"Hey, Tomomi. It's a date. How about you pick some accessories and try them on, asking 'does it suit me?', that kind of thing?"

"Eh-ehh?! Is that so Nii-chan?"

"Purchasing them aside, since we've come here you might as well try putting them on, I think that would be good."

"I-I seee. I learned something then."

Tomomi nodded in consent.

"And so, how about you try putting on a bracelet right away?"

"Let's try that technique out immediately. Next next!"

As we were leaving the store, Tomomi sighed lightly.

"I'm not good with these things."

"With what? Do you have an allergy to metals?"

"Not that, the feel that clerk gave off..."

"Seemed normal to me."

"Hmm, I wonder. I'm bad with 'gal' kind of girls."

"It's as if you went to India and said you're bad with curry."

"Yup. Sorry, my bad."

Why did Tomomi choose Maru-kuu? I wonder if it's to overcome her weaknesses.

Leaving the question unanswered, we went down to the fifth floor. This floor's and clothes colours were very neutral. More pastel than vivid. Also, the clothes had a retro and feminine feel to them.

When I took a look behind, Sayuri was caught by a clerk.

"What is it, Nii-chan?"

"No, um... Sayuri was..."

"Yeah, it looks like Sayuri would like these kind of clothes. Heck, Nii-chan! You're too mindful of what's behind! Concentrate on the date more! It'll be Nii-chan's fault if I fail at the real thing."

"My fault?!"

"That was joke, though, I'd like you to look at me a little more."

"O-okay. Got it."

Tomomi got slightly crestfallen in the middle, making me reflect on it. Today's protagonist was Tomomi.

Leaving Sayuri behind we immediately went down to the third floor and found a speciality store with tights and stockings.

"Nii-chan, do you like girls wearing this kind of thing rather than those with bare legs?"

"W-what are you talking about all of a sudden."

"It's erotic isn't it."

"That's old man's thinking, Tomomi-san."

Tomomi stared at the mannequin wearing black stockings and made a complacent smile.

"This might suit Yuuki I guess. She has a great style."

Because a few days ago, I've had a mysterious experience of putting on something similar on her, I ended up looking away from the mannequin.

Eventually we descended on the second floor without purchasing anything. The date felt like a hurried tour. The shops everywhere were crowded on Sunday, it was hard to take time looking at things. But, rather than enjoy the date, I felt like Tomomi tried to digest it. It might be just my imagination though.

The second floor's stores were even more feminine, there were lots of cute feminine clothes aligned here. There were lots of short skirts though... heck, why am I calmly worrying about mannequin's skirts here...

Tomomi as usual, just look around asking for prices and had come back soon enough.

"Nii-chan. Would it be better if I've turned so that this kind of things suits me?"

Ordinary feminine clothes... huh.

"Your clothes today suit you too, I don't think you need to worry about it? I think it's best to choose clothes you want to wear."

I don't think the clothes she'd like wouldn't fit her.

She's cute in the first place, after all.

"But in that case, I'll end up wearing jersey or shorts for next million years."

Tomomi laughed embarrassedly.

As we went down the escalator. In front of the store with shoes, Tomomi pursed her lips.

"Woah, expensive! I'd buy a several new games with this. And these looks really hard to walk in, too."

It seemed like Tomomi was outraged by the high heels on the display. If I'm not wrong, heels are made to make legs seem more attractive. They shouldn't be compared to exercise shoes.

"These kind of clothes are made to emphasize on leg's beauty, isn't that a splendid mission in itself?"

"It's obvious that shoes that are easier to walk in are better. Ah! That's right, when the heel breaks, the protagonist dashes over to hold the girl in a princess carry. In that kind of sense, it might be good."

"That's very like you. By protagonist, you mean there was something like that in a game?"

"In anime. A drunk girl breaks off her heel and in the past, a man would give her a piggyback ride home... kind of thing."

I don't know the original's story, but when it comes to games and anime talk, Tomomi gets really lively. The sight of her getting scared by clerks and sneaking around seemed like a lie.

In the end, completely defeated by Maru-kuu, Tomomi and I went through the doorway on the first floor to the outside.

When I checked behind us... Sayuri wasn't there.

"Hey, about Sayuri..."

"Nii-chan's worrying too much."

Tomomi took out a smartphone and immediately nodded.

"Sayuri seems to be pondering about clothes to buy, Mika and Yuuki left Maru-kuu and are by the large chain store with cheese tarts in the centre."

"I-I see. Then how about we go eat some cheese tarts too?"

"Nii-chan, that would be a double date. Today we're practising a 1 vs 1 date."

"Sorry. Where are we going next then?"

"Dougenzaka's famous, let's try taking a look there."

After leaving Maru-kuu, Tomomi and I started walking up a gentle slope.

Near the Yunikura's store at Dougenzaka, Tomomi stopped moving and looked to the other side of the road.

"Nii-chan, there's a cinema there."

"TOYO Cinema's written on it indeed."

There were rectangular panels saying it's open to public.

"Were Nii-chan to pick one, what film would you choose for a date?"

It was an appropriate problem for a date practice.

According to the sign there was a lot of animated films displayed on the golden week. Among it there were Holywood's long CG animations, I got curious seeing a famous' character from a game appear in the film.

"Look, in that a Japanese game's character appears, looks interestin' doesn't it."

"Woah! You're right! B-but it's a date, isn't it better to go on a film with more romance?"

"Y-yeah. I see, that's true. Well then, want to watch something now?"

Suddenly, Tomomi started to panic and rattling on.

"We've come on a recon to Shibuya, spending two hours on a film even if we're to have fun is... also, we can watch a film anywhere! A local cinema is enough. Ah! But there's the 3D, stereophonic sound and comfortable seating, although only for a limited time, I've heard that apparently audience is shaken by 4D videos. Technology is amazing isn't it, Nii-chan!"

"S-sure. I don't get it, but that sounds amazing indeed."

Come to think of it, Tomomi is quite obsessed about video and audio equipment. Rather than the film itself, she preferred to talk about the video technology.

"Right? Right? Actually, I'm interested in home theatre's too. You can easily watch VOD film and foreign dramas, the 4K projector's era is upon us... kinda?"

I could no longer keep up. Or rather, I was completely left behind in the conversation.

"G-got it. The recent technology is amazing. But, let's leave the talk about movies and home threatre's for another day."

"Ah... yup, I've gotten excited unconsciously. Sorry, Nii-chan."

Making a slightly regretful expression, Tomomi's line of sight moved to the store next to the cinema.

"Uuu, uu. Shibuya has too many temptations."

"Temptations?"

Next to the cinema there was SEKA's amusement facility.

"The players there must be really good..."

With half opened mouth she stared excitedly and started twisting her body.

That was a very much like her, Tomomi really loved games.

"If you want to play games, you don't have to endure it you know?"

"I-I'm not enduring anything! A-anyway, game arcades aren't feminine!"

"Crane games and Puri Photo give an impression they're mainly done by girls. Also, in case of crane games when you go as a couple, the man is usually going 'All right! Leave it to me. I'll get you whatever you want!' or something, kind of a date's staple thing."

"Nii-chan, do you think that would work with me?"

"Ah, yes. I wouldn't get to have my turn, I guess."

"Exactly. In a crane game it's important to get what you want in three moves. As for Puriphotos I'm not interested, since there's no game elements in it."

Seeing Tomomi's excited expression, I confirmed it.

"You really love game centres, don't you?"

"I-I love them! Rather, I can play the games I love through the net at home, but I also love the unique atmosphere of an arcade. There's also the difference between players in each city..."

Tomomi made a presentation mimicking using a game stick. It didn't seem like a shooter, more like a fighting game.

"Then, that's even more of a waste. You don't have to mind me and should go try fighting them. I'll cheer on you properly."

"B-but that's not very date-like... au."

She suddenly rubbed her belly. Then with a sweet voice she snuggled up to me.

"Nii-chan, I'm hunggryy."

"Well then. It's about time for lunch."

"Let's get a lunch specific to Shibuya!"

"Even if you tell me that... rather, Tomomi, weren't you planning today's date?"

"The plan is always flexible and changes to suit the situation on the field, Nii-chan."

"Then, flexibly... then Roit."

The Royal Hot family restaurant along the road was what I chose."

"Eh?!! A family restaurant? You can find Roits elsewhere too!"

"It's a revenge for not being able to go last time, because of rain."

"Oh, I see. All right then!"

Tomomi easily agreed. She seemed to be bent on it being a place specific to Shibuya, I wondered where does she intend to go after that though. Today, she was being really haphazard, it seemed like the dating practice was unplanned.

After we have finished our lunch, it's become half past one in the afternoon. Immediately after exiting Roit Tomomi stopped and seemed to wonder whether we should proceed further or return to the station area.

"Nii-chan, what do we do? I think it's a waste to go back taking the same route we've come here."

"Won't there be less and less stores as we move away from the station?"

"According to the theory, indeed. But Tokyo is an urban area, let's go to the entrance to the next city!"

"I feel like we're going to get lost. Don't you have any stores other than Maru-kuu you want to go to?"

"Eh, umm... hmmnn... with Nii-chan I'd be happy to go anywhere... oh right!"

Tomomi took out a coin. It wasn't a currency.

"This has a castle drawn on the front, Nii-chan. So, if it's front, we'll proceed. If it's back we'll return."

"Rather than being flexible, you're leaving it to luck."

"They say luck is also a skill!"

With her thumb Tomomi threw the coin upwards. And then, she sandwiched it between the back of her hand and her palm. As she slowly raised her left hand, the coin's front appeared.

"Proceeding ahead is a good thing to do!"

Faced with her wonderful smile and told so, it was hard to say "let's properly decide on the destination!". Moreover, if I go too far with proposals it won't be a good practice for Tomomi.

"I get it. Let's do as coin toss decided. By the way, will Mika and others be all right?"

"They'll contact us if something happens! Those three came after us 'cause they were worried."

After putting the coin in her wallet, Tomomi shook my hand. We started walking side by side.

"Now, let's resume our adventure! Nii-chan."

"S-sure. But, are there any stores ahead of here?"

"The interesting stuff ain't limited to stores. Good luck may come unexpectedly; nothing ventured nothing gained!"

"You're mixing stuff up, Tomomi-san."

At my retort, Tomomi happily narrowed her eyes.

"Speaking of which, from time to time Nii-chan resorts to polite speech."

"Does that seem unfriendly? It's spontaneous."

"At first it did seem unfriendly, but I'm no longer bothered by it. It's kind of a habit, right?"

"Something like that."

As we climbed up a gentle slope, we saw a silver gate on the right. Stopping, Tomomi looked up.

"How do you read this, Nii-chan?"

"Probably, Hyakkendana, isn't it?"

"If it's as the name suggests, then amazin'. That'd mean there's a hundred stores, right?"

"If there's that many, maybe there'll be some Shibuya-specific stores you wanted to see."

Tomomi nodded energetically.

"Let's go, Nii-chan! It has kinda a back-alley feel, we might find an unknown well-established store here."

"Hmm, somehow, I've got a bad premonition."

My hand pulled by Tomomi, we set our feet in Hyakkedana.

Immediately we have come across some unknown stores (?) decorated with conspicuous signs and decorative illumination of fluorescent colours.

Tomomi tilted her head, puzzled.

"What's this. A free guide? Where to?"

"W-who knows."

"Ah! I get it. They'll tell us about the best stores around here, Nii-chan."

"I don't think that's it."

"Since it's free we might as well use it, y'know."

I'm lacking in knowledge of this place too. But, I know that stores in a red light district like this are not something minors should involve themselves.

"Tomomi, calm down. Listen... is an adventure with a guide, a true adventure?"

"Nii-chan... so cool. I fell for you all over again!"

I intended to calm her down, but Tomomi got further excited.

"It's great that you understand. We have to advance on the road we have chosen by ourselves."

"You're right! I was naive to think of getting a guide!"

We have passed by the office with free information. The huge city crowd disappeared as if it was never there, the alley was quiet.

There was no "store-like" stores. There was just one café in the middle, then the road narrowed and has gotten convoluted, we were like a butterfly trapped in the spider's thread, a labyrinth.

That might be an overstatement, but really... is it all right, this route.

Tomomi stopped unexpectedly.

"Nii-chan. Since we're in such a desolate place... we could kiss, right?"

"What are you bringing up all of a sudden!"

And as I retorted, my heart started pounding quickly. Tomomi's eyes who stared intently at me, have started to shake.

"I-it's not like... I want to practice kissing with Nii-chan! Don't misunderstand, it's embarrassing!"

"I-I know that much."

Tomomi's shoulders drooped, dejected by my answer.

"You don't have to put it that way."

Somehow, Tomomi is being strange. She's been restless all day today.

"It's not like I'm refusing here..."

"Then, if I asked you to do it, would you... kiss me?"

Her face slowly approached. It reached the distance I could feel her breathing.

I drew backwards. Behind me there was the building's wall. My hand still being gripped, as if attracted, Tomomi clung to me closely. With the wall behind me I was unable to escape.

I made my decision.

"Well... if it's the cheek, then."

Tomomi's movements, who slowly closed on me, have stopped.

"A-a-a-are you s-stupid? Are you serious Nii-chan? This is just practice. Really, it's just practice!"

"Y-you..."

Shown a smile by Tomomi, I had mixed feelings. When her lips approached, despite being her brother, for just a moment I've thought of something improper.

And this passage... which could be called a back alley, it gave me a strange feeling.

It's just my imagination... I thought. But this city's atmosphere and the power of this place, the so-called "mood", is not to be reckoned with.

"C'mon c'mon, don't space out and let's go, Nii-chan!"

As we started walking, my hand pulled by Tomomi, we finally found a store by the road. The glass store window had a sailor uniform and school swimsuit on the display.

At the very least, I knew it wasn't a store that sold uniforms specific to some school.

It had stuff like nurse outfits and bunny suits too...

"Nii-chan, a store discovered! It says it's a cosplay shop!"

"Please, don't say you want to enter it."

"Cheeh. And it looked so interesting."

I pulled grumbling Tomomi's hand and we proceeded, meanwhile I finally understood the lack of people.

Looking left or right, all was there, were hotels.

"Ni-Nii-chan. Can it be, that this... is a perverted place?"

"Tomomi, are you doing it on purpose?"

"Sorry. I knew places like this exist. But, I didn't think we'd come across one! Still, look at that Nii-chan! It looks like a foreign castle."

Places imitating an old castle or resorts at tropical beaches, somehow the adult world is quite amazing... that kind of impression had leaked out in my mind.

"For now, let's hurry out of here."

"Y-yup. You're right, Nii-chan."

If someone out of place wanders here, it'll definitely be a trouble to those in the city. As we proceeded hurriedly to retreat, suddenly, Tomomi's legs stopped.

"Uuu... Nii-chan. I want to walk a little bit slower."

"Sorry. Was the pace too fast?"

"Normally it would be nothing, but these shoes are cramped and it's hard to walk."

Speaking of which, Tomomi did stop quite often today. So she didn't want to say her feet hurt. I felt a little bit pitiful for not being able to notice it.

It seemed like it'd be better to rest.

I sent an email to the heavenly voice. I asked Selene to search whether is there a store we could take a break in. An email returned after few tens of seconds.

"Hotel Crystal Palace. Service time: A break for 4500 yen... heck, not that kind!"

Was that deliberate?! Did you do it deliberately? Selene!

"Nii-chan, are we taking a break?"

"First we're leaving here. Let's go outside for now!"

"We are outside, Nii-chan."

"Stop finding faults in details!"

While taking the state of Tomomi's feet into account, relying on the map on the smartphone we walked at considerably slower pace than before. Eventually, we finally arrived in front of a department store in west Dougenzaka.

We were relieved to move from the tranquillity of the hotel district into the hustle and bustle of the city.

"Finally, we have returned to our original world."

"It was a different world, wasn't it. It was a heart-throbbing great adventure, Nii-chan."

It was heart-throbbing in more ways than one... good grief.

Once again, I confirmed it with Tomomi.

"Are your feet all right?"

"Yup. Thanks for walking slowly with me."

In front of the building on the west, I compared our location with the map on the smartphone.

"Well then... right, left... right seems to lead towards the station."

"Let's go left then!"

"Still adventuring?"

"Of course. We're on a date after all."

"But before that, let's find a place to sit down for a while."

"If Nii-chan's tired then it can't be helped. Let's leave it with my win in the dating game."

"There's no win or lose in dating, is there."

"I do think there are loser dates and winner dates."

This time's haphazard and foolhardy dating course, was probably a loser one.

Taken away by Tomomi, we went further and further away from the station. The city centre's landscape had gradually changed into a quiet residential area.

We arrived at the Nabeshima Shoto Park. There was a lot of greenery. It was the first time I was able to realize what's an urban oasis.

The two of us sat down in the park and relaxed ourselves.

I exhaled grandly.

"HAaa... what a bizarre date."

"Why sigh, wasn't it fun for you Nii-chan?"

"T-that's not it! There was a lot of first experience's and... how do I say it. Rather than that, do your feet hurt? Aren't you forcing yourself?"

"What a worrier. Hmm. Easy, my feet on top of the heel might feel sore."

Tomomi took the shoe off just her right leg. The place that was sore seemed painfully swollen and red.

So she walked with her foot like that. Wasn't it difficult to make it up to the park like this?

"It's really swollen!"

"Aww. That's quite something. I thought I'd be able to control the pain, but seeing it makes it even more painful."

"How about your left foot?"

"This one seems all right. Size-wise they were just a little bit too small, but in the first place I never wore such cute shoes. I didn't think my feet would get this sore."

That's troubling. It'd be good if we had a plaster to put on it. Maybe I should go and buy one.

And, the moment I thought of that, I was reminded of the floral pouch I put in my shoulder bag. Selene gave it to me along with some suggestive words.

When I took out the pouch from the bag, Tomomi puffed up her cheeks.

"Nii-chan, what's that? That's not Nii-chan's hobby, is it?"

"Selene made me take it. She told me to open it when in trouble."

I opened the pouch and... took out a plaster. Use it when in trouble, so Selene expected this to happen, huh. Be careful and don't hurry, so it referred to the walking speed.

"Ah! A plaster ain't it! Selene's quite attentive in a feminine away. I somehow feel like I lost. How frustrating!"

Tomomi closed her eyes tightly in frustration.

"Well then, I'll put it on. Stretch out your right leg."

First, I stood up and then I knelt in front of Tomomi who was on the bench.

She had extended her white foot towards me.

"Nii-chan. Look at my foot only. If you raise your line of sight a little... bam! You'll get it."

"Don't explode me."

"Or maybe Nii-chan is curious about Tomomi-chan's victory panties? If you honestly confess, I won't hesitate to give you a peek."

"I-I don't have any."

"So you won't be satisfied with just a glance, huh. Nii-chan's such a glutton. You won't be satisfied unless you lick my panties with your stare?"

As Tomomi innocently laughed, I stretched the plaster over the swollen part of Tomomi's foot.

"Oww!"

"S-sorry. Did it hurt?"

"I-it didn't hurt!"

With tears in her eyes, she smiled. So it did hurt after all.

I gently let go of her foot, stood up and pat Tomomi's head.

"You did well to put up with pain, Tomomi. But, be honest and say it when it hurts."

"I-I didn't really lie! A-auu! Nii-chan, that's sneaky! If you make me take a posture like that I can't stand, haauaaaa."

She narrowed her eyes like a cat and her face had become loose.

"Hey, Nii-chan... let's smooch."

How serious was Tomomi... honestly, I had no idea.

We're siblings. We shouldn't do things like that, moreover Tomomi had a boyfriend, so for me to do that... even if Tomomi and I weren't siblings, it was something I wouldn't do.

"Tomomi. I can't do that."

Tomomi opened her eyes wide staring at me, her mouth opened.

"Nii-chan... unless you're get more serious it won't work as practice."

"Y-you're telling me to get serious, of course I can't do that. But, I was serious during today's date."

"Yup. I can tell. Nii-chan acted like Nii-chan properly, and yet.... I..."

She looked down with a brooding expression.

"What is it, Tomomi? Are you okay? Are you bearing with something other than pain in your foot? Tell me what is it! We're siblings after all."

In trembling voice, Tomomi muttered.

"I wonder, why... why is Nii-chan... Nii-chan."

When she quietly raised her face, her expression made it seem like she was about to cry. It was the first time I saw her with such a sad expression.

Tomomi was always positive, whenever in a pinch she aimed for a chance for reversing the situation... I thought of her as of a strong girl. But, that might have been just my belief.

Seeing her shoulders shake slightly, with my little sister about to cry... I didn't know what to do.

"Did I do something bad? Did I step on some kind of landmine, Tomomi? What did you want me to do?"

She shook her head, put on the shoe and stood up.

"Why... stupid...stupid... idiot idiot idiot... Nii-chan you... IDIOOOOOOOOTTTTTTTTT!!"

With no clue what's going on. I stood there dumbfounded, like an idiot.

Leaving me behind like that, Tomomi suddenly started to run.

"W-wait a second! Tomomi! Hey Tomomi!"

Tomomi... was crying. She was shaking off her tears.

Although I chased after her in the earnest, I lost sight of her back after she left the park. The plaster must have been working since she was sprinting.

What did I go wrong with? What should I have done?

I immediately tried to call Tomomi with a smartphone. But, the number you have dialed is out of the service range or there is a possibility it has been turned off. That kind of standard message responded me.

I tried contacting Selene, but apparently the GPS no longer worked after her smartphone was turned off.

I headed towards the station while looking for Tomomi.

Along the way, in the Makkie MauMau Good's Shop I have rejoined with Yuuki and Mika, explaining the situation to them. After that, we ran over to Sayuri who was busy buying things on impulse in Maru-kyu. Adding Sayuri who stood there with her shopping bag, we have returned to the square in front of Hachikō statue.

It might be better to consult with police. When I started thinking seriously about it, info had come from Selene saying that the Tomomi's GPS had resurrected.

Apparently she was in middle of transferring from JR to a private railway. Even as I tried to call her, Tomomi didn't pick it up.

In front of the Hachikō, Mika anxiously listened to me.

"Nii-chama, did you get into a fight with Tomomi-neechama?"

I overlooked something. Something important. That's why Tomomi exploded. No, I detonated her.

It was the same on the Tuesday earlier. It was the second time now. And yet, I had no idea what lit Tomomi's fuse.

Detonating Tomomi's bomb, I'm disqualified as her brother.

I was confused. My thinking wouldn't settle down. But, allowing Mika to realize that, I was really disqualified as a brother.

"Sorry to make you worry Mika. It's okay."

"Is it really okay?"

"Yeah. How was your date with Yuuki?"

"It was super fun! Maple says he had fun too! He could see Catie-chan-senpai in work and was deeply impressed! MauMau-san was great too, he says. Also, Mii-chan really liked the cheese tart. The inside was all sticky!"

"I see. That's great. Yuuki too, thanks for watching over Mika."

Yuuki listened to me anxiously.

"I too had fun with Mika-chan. Nii-san, if there's anything I can do, don't hesitate to consult it with me."

It seemed like she was worried about Tomomi, it would be good to consult it with her. Right now, I couldn't even grasp "what was the problem" between Tomomi and me.

"Y-yeah. Thanks Yuuki. Well, we should get going."

I took half of the luggage Sayuri had with her.

"These are things I have carelessly purchased, letting Onii-sama carry it is..."

"You too must be tired with shopping. Let's go back before it gets dark."

"Y-yes..."

Sayuri nodded without any strength. It seems like her mental determination was exhausted by shopping she wasn't used to.

A several tens of minutes after Tomomi, we got on the train back home. The sky was burning up with madder colours by the time we have reached to the nearest station.

What's going on with Tomomi, really. Making her little sisters worried, that's quite unbecoming of Nee-chan isn't it.

It was clear that I was at fault, but she could say what's wrong and tell me not to do it... ahh, the more I think of it the more I'm confused.

29th of April, Monday

Rushing Out. Darkness. Happy Monday.

Yesterday, what happened afterwards... after we arrived back in the room 701 in which Tomomi was, together with Selene she greeted us with a nonchalant expression. Seeing her behave as if nothing happened, I felt my chest tighten.

I've ended up making Tomomi cry. And... in contrast to the guilt and depression inside of me, Tomomi greeted me as her usual friendly self.

Since Mika fell asleep, around twelve o'clock everyone has decided to take her back to her room.

It was slightly troubled that everyone couldn't return to their rooms until time like this.

Even though Selene was fine as a night type of a person, Mika who's the youngest and Sayuri who leads an orderly life had it hard. Sayuri did her best to fight sleepiness, from time to time she lost to it and swayed to the sides.

Mika didn't fight it, she peacefully breathed in her sleep.

While being careful as not to wake her up, I went down the elevator carrying Mika. After laying Mika down in the bed we have dissolved in the hallway of the second floor.

I tried to call Tomomi, but "Sorry Nii-chan, thanks for going along with me today!" she responded with her usual tone of voice.

Ever since we came back, the entire time Tomomi sent me a gaze saying "Don't mention the events in the park.", not allowing me to approach it.

After returning to my room, I've returned to being alone.

It seems like I was tired by the date I wasn't used to, after taking a shower I fell dramatically onto the bed, before I realized it was ten o'clock of the 29th.

I jumped out realizing I'm late and checking the smartphone, I immediately realized something.

Today was a national holiday.

"Eh? It's from Mariko."

A message from Mariko had reached through the STRING's chat. It came about thirty minutes ago. The content was, today's a holiday so how about we go have fun somewhere? An invitation like that.

In the afternoon... or rather, in the evening I'm going to go to Selene's room, since Mariko invited me so I might as well go play with her.

While I thought that, going to play around with a different girl for a second day in a row might not be the best thing to do as a person. No, well, Tomomi is my little sister though.

I've been in Mariko's care all this time, at the very least I should pay her back by carrying luggage during shopping or through some other punishment.

A message from thirty minutes ago. It's also possible that Mariko had already gone out with her other friends.

No, even so it wasn't good to leave this message unanswered.

First I decided to write I overslept and apologized.

When I sent the message, there was an immediate answer from Mariko. Apparently she hadn't gone out yet.

While shopping, I might as well consult the yesterday's case with Mariko.

I'll say it as a story heard from a friend.

Did I make a mistake on the date with Tomomi... no matter how much I think about it I can't tell, what I knew, was that I definitely made Tomomi cry.

The moment I tried to reply to Mariko "Then, at eleven o'clock in front of the station"——

A mail had come. It was from Selene. Seeing the what's written I opened my eyes wide. My heartbeat sped up and I felt like I was suffocating.

『"Help"』

There was just one word.

That Selene, did she collapse?!

My little sister collapsed! I couldn't use this as a reason. I responded to Mariko through string that I have a sudden appointment. I felt a stabbing pain in the back of my chest.

Mariko responded with "Then I'll go with some friends.", possibly out of concern for me, in the first place I was probably the only friend she could invite... anyway, I sincerely apologized to her and promised to make it up to her, then with pyjamas still on, smartphone, smart key and wallet I have rushed out of the room.

After closing the doors just for a moment, I thought I screwed up.

The smart key's number has changed to 101 and I was no longer able to return to my room.

I didn't examine it properly, but the number doesn't change from the morning until the midnight. Then again sometimes it imperceptibly changes.

After going down to the first floor by the elevator, without knocking I jumped into Selene's room.

"Are you all right Selene?!"

In the dim living room with light-blocking curtains, Selene was there, fallen on the floor. Her eyes were closed and her long black hair spread on the floor, like a fairy tale's Sleeping Beauty... she peacefully breathed in her sleep.

She was gripping her smartphone in her hand.

"Hey, Selene, get a hold of yourself!"

When I raised and shook her slender body, Selene slowly opened her closed eyes and murmured in a feeble voice.

"...Onii-chan..."

"Yeah! It's me! Are you okay? Or should I call an ambulance?"

Selene shook her head sideways and spoke to me in a weak voice.

"...I'm glad you made it in time."

"Made it in time... what the heck?! That way of speaking is way too ominous!"

It's as if saying she's glad to see my face before dying. Stuff of that calibre.

Selene's body was cold. I hugged her tightly.

"...warm..."

"Don't die! I beg you!"

I tried to pass as much of my body temperature to Selene as possible.

Can it be, was Selene affected by some incurable disease?

Is that why she didn't meet anyone and refused to go to school and form relations with others?

After getting along with friends it's hard to bid them farewell. What a thing, s-screw that!

Even though she wanted to go to Nippori with me... is that a dream that won't come true?

"...Onii-chan. My last request... will you listen?"

"Don't say 'last'! I'll do whatever you want! As long as I'm able to, whatever!"

With a pale smile, Selene made a request.

"...I want to eat cream puffs."

"Haa?!!"

"...cream puffs are delicious. I'm hungry."

That moment, I finally understood. That there was an incredible misunderstanding, I've abruptly gotten embarrassed.

When I let go of Selene I was hugging, I asked.

"Hey Selene. Can it be that you collapsed out of hunger?"

Selene shook her head vertically and stared at me with eyes sparkling like jewels even in the dim room.

"...yes. That's why as to avoid extra calories consumption, I have spent time in standby power mode."

Relieved, I let out a large sigh.

"You surprised me. Heck, a mail saying 'Help' is way too scary!"

"...to me, this is a serious situation."

"So, if you eat something you'll be energetic again."

This time she nodded twice.

"...I'll be even more energetic if I eat cream puffs."

"What happened to cup noodles?"

"...recently, after eating outside with Onii-chan and eating Sayuri-chan's meals, my taste had become picky. I have noticed the emptiness of eating cup noodles all alone."

Until recently, Selene was living on a diet saying "I can live on just cup noodles", so her development of taste was a joyous thing. I think she's one step closer to normalization as a human being.

"How about you go shopping before you collapse in your room?"

"...exposed to sunlight I'll melt. Is Onii-chan fine with his little sister melting? Can Onii-chan endure his little sister's melting?"

"Don't talk as if you were made of cheese. Uhh... from now on, make sure to honestly write 'I'm hungry so please feed me something". It sounds like quite something, but if you say that it'll be a great help to me."

"...with Onii-chan pampering me it seems like my independence will completely collapse."

"If you are aware you're being spoiled, be independent. All right! How about we go to convenience store now?"

"...together?"

"If it's together with me, outside won't be scary! After the training so far, you should be able to walk outside during the daytime."

"...going outside in the morning is terrifying. If I did it I'd be almost like a human."

"Isn't that fine, you are a human after all."

"...I am the descendant of the kin of the darkness. My nickname 'Black Sun' isn't just for show.

"Nonononono. It's my first time hearing that nickname. In the first place, Selene is a name of a moon goddess, how did it turn into 'Black Sun'."

"...Black Sun, in other words, the sun was eclipsed by the moon. When the moon and sun overlaps... b-but right now, that's not the meaning."

With the room so dark, the changes on Selene's face couldn't be seen well. But her voice was shaking slightly. Was she embarrassed...?

"So, what do you mean? Tell me so it's easier to understand."

"...I mean, I'm the moon and Onii-chan is Yoichi... the sun. When the two overlap, um... uh... i-it's embarrassing."

I didn't really understand what was she trying to say.

The two of us overlapping, meaning, Selene standing in front of me and the two of us pretending to be EXILE? That certainly might be embarrassing. That's something which looks good only when there's a lot of people.

With that, Selene fell silent. I tried to change the subject.

"Uhh... so Selene, did you gave up on being Undying Cicada?"

"...that's a temporary name for publishing on the net. The alias engraved in my soul must absolutely remain secret."

"You went ahead and let me know of it, is that really fine?"

"...it's okay for Onii-chan. He's special."

Selene faced downwards.

Certainly, Selene and I... even among the little sisters, our relationship wasn't normal.

But that aside, let's see. What should we do.

As I looked around the dim room with curtains closed, I confirmed with Selene.

"By the way, it doesn't seem like you were going to school...?"

"...today's a holiday. Happy Monday banzai."

As Selene proudly puffed her chest, my shoulders drooped dejectedly.

"Then, what about cream puffs? You don't seem intent on going to buy some together. I want to go to the convenience store together with you."

I might have been a little bit mean, but I said that in a theatrical tone of voice.

Selene furrowed her eyebrows thinking hard on it, then nodded after exactly a minute.

"...I'll bear it. Even though it breaks my heart."

"So you concluded your thinking with 'bear it'!"

Just how much was she against going outside.

Even during the practice date with Tomomi, Selene brought a laptop to room 701 and devoted herself to supporting us from indoors.

Selene continued to shake her head sideways.

"...that's also because Onii-chan can't go outside looking like that."

Told that, I once again checked my clothes.

Pyjamas. Certainly, going out like this during the day would take lots of courage.

That's what Selene concluded after looking at my clothes from head to toes.

"...with that reasoning, it means with Onii-chan, we're going to remain indoors for all day long."

After reverse-engineering Selene's plan, I no longer felt like going outside.

To think a day like this would come... no, don't give up, me. Let's convince Selene as her brother. As if I'd hole myself up so easily.

"Geez. What about meals? Without anything we'll be hungry."

"...if we eat cup noodles together, it'll be delicious too. We can ask for a delivery for the dinner."

Damn it. There was still that move.

Ahh, what a lazy day it is! Looks like I can only let myself be caught up in it.

Selene beckoned me suspiciously.

"...now, Onii-chan, please fall into darkness. Don't resist it, leave your body and mind to me. Recently, Onii-chan didn't laze around and relax enough. Look, if you lie down on the floor, you won't be able to find energy to stand up. Let's fall into darkness together."

"N-no! Darkness perish!"

I stood up, put my hands on the curtains and opened them all at once. The sunlight shone through the window. The weather today was suitable for a holiday.

"...NOOOooooo!"

Selene let out a bland scream and fell over. Like that, she muttered.

"...Onii-chan, it's already over for me. Please boil water for cup noodles."

I reluctantly headed over to the kitchen.

After eating the noodles I breathed out and said thanks to Selene.

"I didn't say it properly yesterday, but thank you, Selene."

Selene tilted her head like a small squirrel and asked in return.

"...for what?"

"You sent us information in mails. Also, that pouch with the plaster was a great help."

"...Tomomi-chan is a sore loser so I thought she would force herself to walk around despite the fact the shoe size didn't match."

"Tomomi lost to Selene in girl power! She said something like that."

"...I don't care about that."

Although Selene was a capable girl when she actually did something, the fact she lacked motivation restricted her too much.

"Yesterday, did Tomomi say anything when she came back?"

"...nothing in particular. Just..."

"Just? Did something happen?"

"...this is just my personal opinion. So, I might be wrong."

"Tell me, Selene. Just as a reference."

She pondered for a moment and then slowly, deeply nodded.

"...I don't think, that Tomomi-chan has a boyfriend."

At first, I didn't understand what Selene is saying.

"W-what do you mean, Selene?"

"...I don't know the reason. But, seeing the state she was in yesterday, I felt that Tomomi-chan lied about finding a boyfriend."

I breathed in lightly. After settling the confusion in my heart, I confirmed with Selene.

"If that was true, why did Tomomi lie about getting a boyfriend?"

"...I don't know either."

Neither have I any clue.

"...just now that was my opinion, it might be different from actual facts so please keep it hidden inside your heart Onii-chan."

"Y-yeah. I got it."

It was a suspicion without any proof, it was needless to reveal it to others.

Unexpectedly, Selene's pupils shook.

"...Onii-chan... can I ask something?"

I nodded silently as she looked very serious.

"...if, my social withdrawal was to be cured... would Onii-chan stop taking me on dates?"

Selene muttered that discouraged.

"Where you worried about that?"

She nodded lightly twice in a row.

"...the evening dates with Onii-chan have become fun and I have started longing for a date under the sun. When Tomomi-chan and Onii-chan went on a date, I was somehow envious. But... if the day comes when I'll be able to go outside during the day, there will be no longer any need to practice with Onii-chan."

"I do want to go on a date with Selene too, we can practice as much as you want."

"...Onii-chan."

With movements slower than that of a snail, Selene slowly clung onto me.

Smiling, I told her.

"After this Golden Week is over, how about you go to school? Aim for the date in Nippori wholesale district!"

"...uuu. Onii-chan you sadist."

"I don't think I raised the hurdle that much. You too said you wanted to be independent, Selene."

"...that's... true. It's troubling. Please let me think about it."

The fact she said she's troubled and that she'll think about it, is a proof that she's seriously and positively trying to change herself.

It's fine as long as I encourage her from behind over time... just, how much time do we have left I wonder.

When I looked at the clock on the room's wall, the noon still hadn't come.

"...oh right. Today is a perfect day to reveal my lazy and embarrassing side to Onii-chan. By experiencing my life, please find more of my weaknesses. Surely, it'll be useful with my rehabilitation."

"You just changed the way to put if from 'falling to darkness'."

With a serious expression, Selene said.

"...even though the essence is the same, the packaging can be better or worse. My daily life... first, sleeping until noon. And, after waking up I eat and check the anime in TV."

Selene turned on the TV and recorder with the remote.

It seems like I could only give up on going outside today.

The anime was Selene's favourite transforming heroine rangers. After the opening came the title call scene.

〈"Eh? I was the only one not called? Miki's surprise birthday.〉

"...I saw this one before."

Selene instantly pressed the recorder's stop button. In no time, she played another anime. It was one with lots of boys coming out of robots.

Strangely restless, Selene wouldn't turn in my direction.

"What is it, Selene? You're unusually hurried."

"...I'm in my own pace and calm."

She didn't complete the sentence. That's unusual.

After that we have immersed ourselves in anime until the evening. In the middle of it I was unable to retain patience and started to clean the room.

For the dinner, Selene asked for a home delivery through the net and we ate together.

As the evening grew later Selene started to get motivated, she rushed towards the sewing machine around ten o'clock. What an extreme slow-starter.

When I looked at Selene as she concentrated on work, her appearance sleeping on the bed seemed like it was a lie.

As she struggled with the sewing machine, I dazedly thought of tomorrow.

I'll be alone with Tomomi, the two us.

I need to apologize. Honestly, maybe she'll tell me what did I do wrong.

If I apologize properly and am forgiven, maybe... I'll hear Tomomi's true feelings.

The thing about the boyfriend aside, the time to slowly talk with Tomomi was absolutely necessary.

30th of April, Tuesday

Bluffing. Weakness. Depressed.

Before the morning homeroom, Mariko came up to my seat.

She was in a strangely good mood, she had a smile as if she got over something. I tried asking her if something good happned and heard that she had resolved one of her worries.

It was a problem with her little sister's, Chitose-chan's boyfriend.

Speaking of which, by chance Mariko had the same problem I did.

No, saying it's a problem suggests it's a bad thing. I was troubled over how should I behave towards my little sister who found a boyfriend.

Mariko didn't resolve anything, but rather she was able to properly talk about it with her little sister, Chitose-chan.

To speak of it from the conclusion... her boyfriend was a celebrity. And of course, it was Chitose-chan's unrequited love.

When Mariko resolved herself and asked her to show a photo, it was revealed to be a member of a popular idol group.

As for yesterday's shopping invitation, Mariko must have wanted to consult Chitose-chan's case with me.

But, she easily resolved herself alone and told me not to worry about it.

Right now, it felt like I could consult Tomomi's case with Mariko.

Still, as I thought, siblings' problem should be resolved between the siblings, I should overcome it and proceed forward. Also, I still haven't spoken with Mariko about my little sisters.

About my friend's little sister's boyfriend... that kind of roundabout lie wasn't too good.

The boyfriend's photo... huh.

If I said I'd like to see the photo, Tomomi would probably be reluctant. That's the kind of feeling I had, somehow.

After school, resolving myself I returned back to the mansion and rang room 601's intercom.

She might not want to be together with me just the two of us and put on the chain lock... these kinds of concerns were unfounded.

"Welcome back Nii-chan!"

"Y-yeah. I'm back Tomomi."

"Come in come in."

Invited over by Tomomi, I intruded on her room.

I passed by the living room and was sat on the sofa. Tomomi brought over two PET bottles of cola from the refrigerator in the kitchen.

"What would you like today Nii-chan?"

I received the bottle with cold cola, opened it and drank some.

"Ohh! You must've been quite thirsty."

"Puhaa! This is tasty."

The words did not continue there. Tomomi seemed somewhat restless.

"Hey, Tomomi!"

"Nii-chan!"

Unable to bear the silence, the two of us with perfectly same timing have cut in.

"W-what is it? Go on, Tomomi."

"No no, go on Nii-chan."

"You don't have to refrain."

"No such thing."

Since we were pressing the initiative on each other, I lightly cleared my throat.

"Um, then taking you up on your words. ...Tomomi, is it going well with your boyfriend?"

Momentarily, Tomomi's expression froze, her smile still on.

"O-Oo-of course. There ain't no need for Nii-chan to worry."

"I see. So, when are you going to introduce him?"

"I-introduce?"

"Well, it might be slightly awkward for him. Our home's environment is slightly complex."

Tomomi nodded grandly.

"That's right, explaining that is a bit hard, I feel bad for Nii-chan but introducing him would be hard..."

"Then how about you show me his picture?"

Her face grew pale.

"P-pictures and such are NG."

"So you didn't take any pictures together?"

"Yup. He's kinda shy."

"Is that so. What kind of person is he?"

"Umm... his stature is somewhat like Nii-chan's, his personality is rather serious but there are things off about it. You could call him caring. He doesn't tell jokes by himself and is more like one that retorts. Slightly air-headed and quite radiant when I mess with him, I guess. Also, he has kind parts about him..."

Tomomi's expression have turned completely feminine. Just by thinking about that person Tomomi's face turned like this... But, from what she's saying he doesn't seem like a bad guy.

"His name? Age? Ah... sorry. Being too inquisitive is no good even if we're siblings."

"T-that's right Nii-chan, you too didn't tell us anything about that childhood friend girlfriend. That's not something you'd like to tell a little sister right?"

"Mariko is my childhood friend, but we're not in a relationship you're thinking of!"

Both her shoudlers trembled as she stared at me.

"I-in the first place, Nii-chan, what do intend after knowing about your little sister's boyfriend?"

"Nothing."

"Then you don't have to ask."

"I'm not going to do anything, but I am worried."

"You're worried?"

"Yeah. I'm worried. I'd lie if I said I'm not worried."

"About that... just how much were you worried?"

"Even if you ask me how much..."

"Were we walking holding hands? Or, did we k-kiss? W-were you worried about these kind of things?"

"D-dd-did you?!"

"We didn't!"

"I see..."

I was relieved deep inside.

"Ah! Just now, were you relieved? Can it be you were relieved?!"

"T-that's not really it..."

Tomomi blushed and immediately changed the topic.

"Okay! That's enough. Let's forget about the boyfriend, let's play games Nii-chan! What would be good, hmm. Rather than competition one, something to play in co-op would be better. Oh right, the one where you rampage around the city in a gang would be good. Let's attack the police station together! We'll send them flying with Tomomi-chan's huge rocket launcher!"

"What an anti-social game!"

"Ehh. Then, in this one you can't cooperate, but you can become an island nation's dictator and squeeze out taxpayer's money to fill your bank account in Switzerland, wanna try? You can beat up those who try to meddle in politics and demonstrators by using army, even assasinate activists. When there's a coup d'etat you can give some of the instigators ranks in the army to hijack it. That's just trivia about it."

"I can't imagine that, but I'll refrain. Still, you're sure something to find games like that."

"I said I'm eatin' games. They're not to play around with!"

Saying that with a smug expression, seems like she's having fun.

"Earlier during the date, maybe we should have gone to the game centre after all?"

"Ni-Nii-chan! Forget that! Forget all that!"

"Even if you tell me to..."

"Just forget that! It's fine already. Being able to play games with Nii-chan side by side makes me happy enough. We don't have to go anywhere together. As your little sister it makes me happy enough."

Staring at me Tomomi laughed. But, her eyes were sad.

She forced herself to laugh.

That kind of expression was unlike her.

Tomomi is convinced that the date before had failed. If she becomes scared of dates, that'll be my responsibility.

The date with her was interesting.

I can't say there were no failures back then, I think I failed as well. How did that happen, I didn't know myself yet. That's why I think saying that isn't enough.

But, including the accidents it was all interesting. I had fun.

We just have to reflect and capitalize on it.

Revenge was possible. It had to be done.

"That's right. Hey, Tomomi... let's go on a date."

Not letting any kind of voice, Tomomi solidified with mouth half-opened.

"Once again, please go on a date with me."

As I emphasized on it, Tomomi finally returned.

"W-why, Nii-chan? Even if you go on a date with me... uh...um... see... Nii-chan back then... didn't have fun... I don't have a talent for dates..."

Tomomi was scared, like an injured fawn.

"I had fun. Going into places I normally wouldn't go to was a great adventure! That's why, as thanks I'd like you to let me lead the date this time."

"Nii-chan will... decide on the date's course?"

"Yeah. Where will we go and what will we do. I'll consider it myself."

"So Nii-chan wants to practice dating too? Then maybe with Sayuri or Yuuki..."

"It has to be you. Properly finish the date practice with me and let's get rid of your fears!"

"Y-you don't have to do that."

"I can't let you date your boyfriend while you still have the failure in mind. So, let's have a fun date together."

I held her hand with my both hands as to wrap around it. Tomomi nodded with a quiet "Yup".

It seems like she acknowledged it.

All right. Let's do my best! Let's arrange a date Tomomi will enjoy!

1st of May, Wednesday

The Project. Authentic. Date Plan.

Treated to a lunch box by Mariko during the lunch break, I had a conversation with her about how quickly had the April passed and then she asked me about my schedule for this month.

The only thing I have decided so far was the date on this Saturday. Since I had no idea what waited ahead, it was hard to think of a plan.

As I was unable to explain, Mariko peered at my face with a pondering look.

I have nothing in particular for next week, I ended up answering.

Mariko nodded with a big smile... somehow, making me feel guilty.

I wondered if I should tell Sayuri and others that I'll be going on a date with Tomomi on Saturday.

While distressed about it, I rang room 501's intercom and the door opened immediately.

"Onii-sama, welcome back home."

"I-I'm back."

Sayuri's today coordinated appearance, was exactly like one we saw on one of the store's mannequins at Shibuya's Maru-kuu.

"It looks good on you, Sayuri."

"Is that true, Onii-sama! Thank you very much."

Happy and shy Sayuri made me pass through the room then passed me tea she prepared. The Myna Bird Kyu-chan spoke when it saw me.

『"This isn't buying on impulse! This isn't buying on impulse!"』

The image I've held of Sayuri was that of someone who holds the strings of her purse tightly... her usually firm self had ended up backlashing last weekend.

With tea on the tray and facing down, Sayuri returned from the kitchen.

"Kyuu-chan, why can you select things so accurately?"

『"Will Onii-sama like these clothes? I'm worried."』

"Uuu... be quiet for a moment."

With a troubled expression Sayuri covered the bird cage with black cloth and Kyu-chan had gone silent.

"That'll be... it."

"Isn't it pitiful, remaining in the dark?"

"She'll just think it's night and go to sleep."

It feels like Kyu-chan is going to end up having day and night reversed.

I sipped some tea and exhaled.

"Um, Onii-sama. Shall we deepen our sibling bond today? Of course, if you want to get rid of the framework called 'siblings' I won't hesitate."

"Uhh, I'd be grateful, if I could consult something with you today."

"Of course! As long as I'm able to, please ask me whatever."

"Well, um... it's a consultation on dating."

Sayuri's eyes sparkled.

"Please wait a moment! I'll bring the materials."

Just when I thought she went to bedroom, Sayuri returned with bunch of magazines, notes and writing utensils. Excited she lined them up side by side on the table.

"You're quite prepared aren't you?"

"For Onii-sama's sake I have gathered this together."

"Do you have a recommended date course?"

"Of course. I have summarized the dating spots in Kanto by the area."

"I'd be glad if you taught me."

When I bowed, Sayuri opened her notes.

"Let's start with course 1 then. New Tokyo's radio tower and old town's area date!"

"You mean like a radio tower like the Sky Tree? The view from the observatory might look amazing..."

"Onii-sama. Just climbing up that tree isn't appealing enough. Of course, the view is charming but there's a lot of commercial facilities allowing you to enjoy bird's view. This one includes walking down the old town in its atmosphere so it's two in one! Also, there's many convoluted and unpopular alleys in there."

As if she had memorized it, Sayuri fluently described it.

When I glanced at the notes, all over the map written in red were things like "police doesn't appear", "no pedestrian traffic", "society's blind spot" and "shadows".

"G-got it. I see, so it's not just the radio tower. It sounds very attractive, so since it's '1' it means there are others right? You always investigate very thoroughly."

"Of course. Then the classic of classics! I'll introduce the Maumauland."

She turned to the next page of the notebook and opening the magazine at the same time, Sayuri begun her lecture about the theme park.

"There's one in the Chiba prefecture too, an amusement park everyone loves."

"But you actually weren't there, were you."

"I-it's the first time for me too. For the first time to be with Onii-sama... is too wonderful."

The way you're talk is going in a strange direction, Sayuri-san.

"But, won't the super-popular spots be crowded?"

"That's true. Even if you line before opening of the park, you must run between parades and popular attractions to get on. Ah! It's dangerous to run in the park but... anyway, what's important is how to avoid crowds."

"I see. Can I take a look at the notes for a little bit?"

"U-umm... here you go."

Starting with nearest station until the Maihama station where the Maumauland is, there was a schedule written in very small detail.

The preferred path between super popular attraction from the the opening of the park as well as an efficient route for walking around the park. The route also had some derivations and alternatives to avoid the expected crowds at attractions, as well as a convenient localization of the roof in case there was rain.

"You've never been there, but the prepared schedule makes it seem like you'd like to go there."

"That's... um..."

Sayuri made a troubled smile.

"Is there any problem?"

"A-actually... it's a direct copy from a magazine."

She opened the magazine with the theme park explained. The contents of the page were marked with sticky notes and roughly the same.

However, while it was mostly a copy, in the notes there was also information not existing in the magazine.

On the map of the amusement park, there were mysterious encryptions like "smooch point", "no surveillance cameras", "there's no one inside (?)".

Yup, let's make it so I saw nothing.

When I flipped towards the next page in the notebook, Sayuri started to panic cutely.

"Aaa! You can't go any further!"

She stood up as if to hang over me and tried to steal the notebook back.

"Wai...! Sayuri!"

"Onii-sama is from the young generation so... kyaa!"

Raising a scream Sayuri slid on her feet and dove towards me. While still sitting down, her chest was pressed onto my face.

There was a gentle scent of the fabric softener and... a soft sensation. She should have tried to take away the notebook I held in my hands, but Sayuri had hugged my head tightly instead.

"Onii-sama, please return it! Please return the notebook!"

"Fghgfhgh! Sayuri, calm down!"

I somehow managed to slip out of Sayuri's solidified embrace and stood up.

"Onii-sama, why would you stand up?"

"Would you? Heck! Let's pass embrace as a thing fine to do as siblings. But, why would you press your chest on me?!"

"That was just the momentum. Something that crosses boundaries."

"Don't cross them! If you're going to do that, then I'll read the secret page you don't want to show to me."

I opened the notebook I held in my hands and confirmed.

I thought there might be some kind of terrifying scheme, but when I opened that page... it was a well-organized and easy to understand, Sayuri's original date plan.

"What what... Tokyo power spot tour in Sugamo."

"Hawaaaa! Hearing it aloud makes me too embarrassed!"

So pressing your chest on me wasn't embarrassing?!"

"Sugamo is granny's Harajuku. I admired it ever since I was in elementary school, it's too embarrassing."

"Nono, even I know of the Togenuki Jizo... rather, what are the 'power spots'?"

"Places in which spiritual energy gathers, you'll become energetic after going there."

Ah! Speaking of which, Sayuri likes things like divination and spiritual stuff. Well then, this third plan might be Sayuri's favourite.

Of course the Sky Tree and Maumauland were also appealing, but in this power spot tour page I could feel Sayuri's commitment.

"I quite like this third plan."

"R-really?"

"Yeah. I can't say it well, but I think it has a glow of your personality."

"I couldn't find any articles in the magazines so I collected information from the net. That's why the completion rate of this plan pales in comparison as compared to the two previous ones."

"No such thing. Your 'I want to try it!' feelings come through very well."

On the map from earlier there were mysterious lines like "darkness", "restricted area" and "dead end" written... but I feel like I'll lose if I bother myself with it.

When I returned the notebook Sayuri hugged it tightly and faced downwards.

Even if it's not a classic dating spot, going to a place you want to go... isn't that what's important?

I feel like Sayuri taught me something important.

2nd of May, Thursday.

Serious. Devotion. Course Counselling.

Mariko still had her good mood from yesterday and smiled more than usual.

Since the person her little sister Chitose-chan likes is an idol singer, her worries were gone... what's this? Mariko ended up saying "I might have been an overprotective sister", but I had no idea how to reply to it.

My history of being 'onii-chan' is just one month. On the other hand, Mariko's history as a sister was more than ten years.

The time spent together with little sisters... with family... is irrelevant! I was unable to assert myself that. We were still strangers last month.

Still, I want to give them something.

As I vaguely thought of that, Mariko started to talk with me about homework.

And that this entire time the reply for question what I would like to eat was on hold.

Seeing me in thoughts worried, Mariko said "request accepted" and smiled. Somehow I felt like I did something bad to her all the time.

In the end what was she making, even as I asked she wouldn't tell me. It was too late.

Really... what's going on.

Just, Mariko didn't show any signs of anger, any signs of sadness, she continued to smile and didn't pursue the topic.

In the first place it was my fault for not deciding on it. And yet, it was strange to hear that the request was accepted despite that.

I went home while still worried about Mariko's case.

Today Yuuki was waiting for me in her room. While she was happy, I worried that the case with club tour might not have worked.

"Welcome back Nii-san. Now, come enter."

"I-I'm back."

When I passed by the living room and sat down on the sofa, Yuuki immediately made me coffee. Even without asking for it, she made me one with milk and plenty of sugar.

Yuuki sat down with a mug of black coffee and stared at me.

"I have a report for Nii-san today."

Her eyes sparkled.

That's great. It seems like the club tour was successful.

"It looks like something good happened?"

"Yep! Actually I was given a tour of the tea ceremony club."

As she flashed a smile, happy I ended up smiling myself.

"Ohh. That's nice. Weren't you nervous to stay with girls?"

"I-I did my best. I think it's also thanks to Nii-san's and everyone."

Yuuki faced down a little embarrassed, shyly.

She was honest, gentle and innocent. Although she tends to be reserved, Yuuki is a really good girl. Unintentionally, the fondness towards my little sister turned into worldly desires.

"So, how was the tour?"

"I've been treated to green tea and sweets. While simple, I was also taught tea etiquette. The tea ceremony seems formal, traditional and stuffy but everyone is a good person, they welcomed me."

I'm relieved Yuuki was able to do well.

"I see. You did well, Yuuki."

"It's thanks to Nii-san encouraging me. And so, Nii-san... I'm thinking of entering a club once I enrol in high school."

Yuuki too is trying to take a step forward. As her brother I need to support her.

"There's a lot of various clubs, are you going to enter tea ceremony club?"

She raised her eyebrows, troubled.

"To polish my insufficient girl power, I think a feminine club would be better, right?"

"I sure would like to see your appearance during tea ceremony. The kimono would surely fit you well."

Suddenly, Yuuki turned red up to her ears.

"T-tt-that's impossible. There's no way a kimono would suit me."

"There's no need to panic so much."

"B-bubut... there's no way, Nii-san."

Yuuki appealed to me with tears in her eyes.

"Are you bad with kimonos?"

"T-they say J-Japanese clothing doesn't suit big breasts... not that, a-actually... I'm bad with seiza. My feet get numb and I can't stand. Today too, during the tea ceremony club they had to massage my feet... it makes me embarrassed."

What specific person... rather, I think normally one can get accustomed to sitting in seiza...

"I'm no good with it either, so I have nothing to say in response. Ah! What about the tea itself?"

"I still like coffee more, I guess."

Maybe Yuuki was too hooked onto coffee to do tea ceremony.

"W-well there's that. I don't know well myself and only have an image, but in tea ceremony rather than drink tea by yourself it's more about serving the visitors entertaining them with beautiful etiquette. The spirit of hospitality, kind of thing."

"I-is that so. Yeah... hospitality is very feminine isn't it. And yet I... was completely unable to welcome..."

Yuuki got depressed?!

Seems like I made a mistake in how lead the topic.

The club activities weren't limited to cultural-types.

"Oh right! If its you, aren't sport clubs all right? Since you're tall you might be welcomed in basketball or volleyball clubs."

"I only did it in gym class before, is it all right for a novice to start from high school? I'm worried that I'll hold them back."

She's modest, but as I thought, she holds back too much.

I want Yuuki to have more confidence.

"Everyone is a beginner when they first start something, I don't think it's too late in high school. Not hiding anything, I too, am just a novice onii-chan with less than a month practice."

Yuuki suddenly burst laughing.

"Fufufu! ...ah., sorry Nii-san. I was surprised since you said something strange."

"It's not that strange is it. Oh, that's right! How about a drama club?"

"M-me in a play?! I can't do it!"

"No no, I don't think you should say it's impossible right from the start. I mean, you can do either a man or woman's role."

Her ponytail shook to left and right like a dog's tail.

"Whether a man's role or woman's role, it's impossible for me to act in front of public in the first place!"

"I think having courage is a good thing. Also, plays aren't just the actors, there's also work behind scenes right? Like setting up lighting, sound effects and costumes. Also, small and large props. There's a lot of roles, you might find something that interests you, Yuuki."

"You know a lot Nii-san, you're amazing after all."

It's troubling if you look at me with so much respect, Yuuki-san.

"I'm not that knowledgeable."

"Um... drama club is good, but what other club activities are there? In high school there's probably a lot more club activities than in middle school, right?"

That was true, but what was the club Yuuki would be able to live fulfilling high school life in? Since I, in the first place didn't participate in club activities in my middle school either I was unable to give her any advice...

Speaking of which, in the middle school's student council I spoke with various people in charge of various clubs and also attended in club presidents' meeting on behalf of the student council president.

In the middle school there was the baseball club, tennis club, soccer club as well as track and field club. From the arts, there was brass band... hmm, what kind of club could capitalize on Yuuki's talents?

Since it felt like Yuuki would be able to do well in any kind of club, there was no special "this is it!" I could think of.

"I-in any case! If it's you, whether sports or cultural ones, I think you'll be able to do well in any of them, Yuuki. I guarantee that."

You can do anything! That kind of advice was no good. Still, Yuuki smiled in return.

"Thanks, Nii-san. Oh right, tell me about your middle school days, Nii-chan."

"About me?"

Yuuki nodded deeply.

"I'd like to know for reference."

"While I did recommend you club activities Yuuki, I actually haven't entered any club myself."

"Eh?! I-is that so."

As her eyes rounded in shock, I continued.

"But I did enter student council. I helped out with chores as the first year and eventually I've become the student council's vice president."

"So not the president but the vice-president. I'm surprised there was someone more talented than Nii-san."

She let out a sigh with a shocked expression.

"Hey hey, what did you think I am."

"A wonderful Nii-san who thinks of his little sisters, of course!'

Yuuki is too honest, she's a girl immune to sarcasm.

She really did admire me... ahh, how frustrating. My heart hurts.

I'm not the person Yuuki respects. Rather, I'm mostly incompetent piece of junk. Sorry.

And, as I started to depreciate myself unable to find balance in my mind, Yuuki continued to stare straight at me.

Please stop! My own worthlessness is going to make me drop dead!

I lowered my shoulders and started making excuses.

"U-uhhh... thanks to leading the juniors in the student council, I'm able to speak with Yuuki normally, I mean... back then I was in charge of the juniors for which I was complimented by president. But, that was about it, even after I became vice president nothing changed from what I did since first year, I'm not a respectable person you think I am. The ones deserving respect are those people who stand above and make the decisions."

Thinking of it now, back then the student council president pushed all the work with juniors on me.

Thanks to that when I suddenly got five little sisters, I was somehow able to act like their onii-chan... I think. There's a lot I still can't do though.

I'm convinced now, was written on Yuuki's face.

"So Nii-san is so caring because you have experience, right. As I thought, you're amazing."

"Don't praise me! It's embarrassing!"

Yuuki lightly shook her head and ponytail.

"I'll praise Nii-san lots. Since Nii-san always praises me, I want to return a little of it. Nii-san is very caring, good at making curry... and... c-cool."

Her blushing face was incredibly feminine and sweet.

When we're alone, from time to time this expression Yuuki makes has my heart skip a beat.

Even though she says she's lacking in femininity, Yuuki is a gem with hidden girl power. From some of the polished spots she's already starting to shine through.

Red up to her ears, she repeated in panic.

"I-it's true. Nii-san is really, really cool!"

"T-thanks! B-but let's stop this! Any more and it'll get dangerous!"

As we complimented each other, the atmosphere turned really strange. Also, the hurdle was raised too high. Unable to live up to Yuuki's expectations I'll start feeling increasingly useless.

The "be confident" I said to Yuuki had returned like a boomerang and pierced me... I guess.

"Hey, Yuuki. Do you dislike being praised by me? Doesn't it turn into pressure?"

"I-it was embarrassing at times, but I never disliked it before. It's because Nii-san is a good person. I was really happy."

Yuuki made a carefree smile and like that, she continued.

"I look up to Nii-san, I think that's why I honour you."

"Honour, you..."

"I mean, Nii-san too has his high school life, that life might be over as soon as tomorrow or there's a possibility it'll continue until next week, or the week after that. So, since Nii-san has friends, if you want to go somewhere with them after school, get along... I'd like you not to worry about me and just do it."

Leaning forward, Yuuki seriously peeked into my face.

"But... then..."

"We'll meet on Saturday and Sunday, it's my decision. I want Nii-san to spend his time meaningfully. Of course, if you have no other plans I'll gladly welcome you."

"Y-yeah, thanks."

Mariko's face floated in my mind. Since Yuuki proposed it herself, if such an opportunity came I'll take her up on her words.

"Well then, today I'll make curry and Nii-san will be the one eating!"

With that said, Yuuki started to prepare dinner.

The secret ingredient of her curry, was somehow just like I imagined... the instant coffee.

3rd of May, Friday.

What I want. What I Like. Keep it secret.

The morning on which the second half of the Golden Week begun.

Through STRING, a message from Mariko "Decided on chicken roast" had come.

At first I wondered what's that about, but soon enough realized it was the "deadline for requesting dishes".

Roast, isn't that more like food you'd eat at parties.

And since she's challenging that, it might be cooking practice for someone's celebration.

I responded to message and chatted with Mariko.

Today, Mariko was going out together with Chitose-chan. The chat was rounded up within five minutes by Mariko.

After that, I started to check up on the smartphone.

Since tomorrow I have a date with Tomomi, I was diligently planning for it.

With the notes Sayuri organized as a reference, I confirmed the date course I devised once again.

It was perfect. The weather was supposed to be sunny on the weekend, but I have provided additional pattern in case there was rain.

When I finished preparations for tomorrow, it was still just about ten o'clock. Clothed neatly I left the room. Friday was Mika's day. I went down the elevator to the second floor.

Tensed, I sounded the room 201's interphone.

No, I wasn't actually tensed but... what would I do were I to run into Murasaki-san.

The possibility wasn't zero.

As I was distressing about it, the door opened.

Mika's face appeared, she was holding Maple.

"Welcome back Nii-chama. Want lunch? A bath? Or maybe, you want Mii-chan?"

She held her cheek with one hand and a squirming gesture. It was cute. But, just who on earth did this come from.

"It's still kinda early for lunch, as for bath I can take one in the evening."

"Then play with Mii-chan."

Mika pulled my hand and headed to the living room.

She sat down on the stool together with Maple and after having me sit on the sofa she stared at me intently.

"Mii-chan heard a rumour. The origin of this information is a secret."

"Why so formal?"

"Nii-chama, are you going on a second date with Tomomi-neechama?"

"Y-yeah. Who did you hear that from?"

"Tomomi-neecha... it's a secret."

It seems like Tomomi told everyone about tomorrow's date. Just in case, let's explain it to everyone via mail.

"Uhh, I'll admit it. Tomorrow, I'll be going on a date with Tomomi again."

"Is the reason you are going on a second date with Tomomi-neechama, because she's the eldest daughter? Mii-chan the youngest child, gets no date?"

Mika asked with anxiety in her eyes and trembling voice.

"N-no such thing. It happened by chance."

"T-then can Mii-chan too go on a date with Nii-chama?"

"Of course. I promise."

Discouraged Mika burst into a dazzling smile.

"Yup! It's a promise! Listen okay, let's go on a date with Maple, the three of us. Ah! But Yuuki-neechama and Murasaki-neechama might be good to come too."

I can understand Yuuki, but having Murasaki-san accompany us...

"So Tomomi, Sayuri and Selene can't come with us?"

Troubled Mika faced downwards.

"You see, Nii-chama. If Selene-neechama is exposed to the sunlight, she'll melt. Because Mii-chan is a good girl she has to come back once the crows start crying out."

"Ahh. I see."

Selene starts moving seriously only after the evening comes.

"Since Tomomi-neechama has a boyfriend, if she comes to date with Nii-chama the boyfriend will be pitiful."

"I-is that so. Then, Sayuri?"

"Sayuri-neechama... um, somehow!"

There's no apparent reason as compared to the two earlier?!

"You say 'somehow', isn't there some kind of a reason?"

Hmm, she tilted her head troubled and then nodded, when she came up with something.

"I mean, Sayuri-neechama has been trying to stick the boyfriend to Tomomi-neechama all this time..."

"Is that so?"

It seems like Sayuri's "I hope everyone but me finds a boyfriend plan" was ongoing. Mika pursed her lips and continued.

"You see you see, when everyone talks... ah! I can't say that. Nii-chama, keep it secret. Please keep it secret!"

"Y-yeah. Got it. I promise I won't tell anyone."

Speaking of which, little sisters must be having secret meetings. It didn't seem like they gather in someone's room. Well, if I pry it'll trouble Mika so let's stop here.

Mika slowly calmed her breathing, sat down Maple on the stool and stood up, then quietly sat down on top of my lap.

"W-what is it, Mika?"

"You know, listen okay? What does Nii-chama like? Maple loves girls, he says! He says not bear girls, but human girls are nice."

"H-haa. Just what is he..."

"Does Nii-chama like girls?"

"I-I'm, uhh... by 'like' you mean like, liking food?"

"Yup! Food is all right, what you want or what you're gathering, anything."

"Being asked that is kind of troubling."

Being able to live with my little sisters like this makes me happy enough... well, will that do? I guess.

"Hey, heey, what is it?"

"I... rather, why would you ask that all of a sudden?"

"It's a secret. Mysterious women with many secrets are charming, I heard."

Is that so, o' great little sister. Since Mika's serious, I'll be scolded if I don't answer properly.

Earlier, when answering Mariko it all ended up being strange replies.

"I like little sisters."

"Ehh?! Nii-chama, you want many more little sisters? Then, can there be little sisters tinier than Mii-chan? Mii-chan too is onee-san, after all."

"Nono, there's enough as is. Heck, this is more than I deserve."

"Haa, is that so."

That way of speaking just now, it was somewhat similar to Murasaki-san's.

"Something I like, other than little sisters..."

Actually, I didn't really have anything I would like. As long as I have everything I need to live, I'm happy. I think the room I'm living in is too luxurious for me.

The reason for this was probably... Jinya-san.

When I was a child, if I asked, Jinya-san bought me anything I'd like.

When Jinya-san stopped coming, I turned into a bad kid who wanted too much from Grandpa and Granny.

Scolded firmly by Grandpa, I was able to reform myself.

And as the backlash... I don't want to put it that way, but even now asking or begging for something felt bad to me.

Speaking of which, when was it that Jinya-san stopped coming any more...

"What is it Nii-chama? Does your stomach hurt?"

"He? Ah, sorry Mika. I got lost in thoughts.'

"Nii-chama, it's all right to tell Mii-chan in secret what you want, okay?"

"Hmm. Let's see. Uhh..."

"Then, a hugging pillow it is."

"A hugging pillow..."

"When Nii-chama becomes lonely at night when Mii-chan isn't there, I think it's all right to hug a pillow and think of it as of Mii-chan."

"T-then please make it a hugging pillow."

"Yup! I think it'll fit Nii-chama perfect."

I wonder... what's this mysterious sense of defeat.

Mika got up from my knees, turned on spot with a twirl and looked into my face, her skirt softly fluttered. Yeah, no matter what she does, it's all adorable.

"Also, see, if Nii-chama has something scheduled on Friday, Mii-chan can bear it alone. I'm no longer a child, after all."

"Y-yes? Um, that's..."

That's what Yuuki said... isn't it. I confirmed.

"If I have something planned for Friday, I'm not to worry about you... is that right?"

"I can endure one day. When Nii-chama isn't here, Mii-chan can call Onee-chamas to her room or play with Maple."

It seems like the little sister meetings actually happen. During those they consult each other and cooperate, if they didn't keep it secret from me and told me about it, nothing bad would...

No, possibly, it could be that they were speaking among little sisters about something they should be telling me, their brother.

I-it's not like I'm feeling lonely for being excluded.

"Got it. If I have errands I can't miss, at that time I'll let myself be spoiled by your kindness, Mika."

"Yup yup! Nii-chama can't become someone bad at socializing in school."

It was so accurate my ears hurt. In class I still seem out of place and don't have any friends. Yeah, told to go out for some event with two other guys makes me scared now.

"Thanks, Mika."

When I pat her head with gratitude, Mika smiled happily.

4th of May, Saturday.

Revenge. High Tension. 2nd Date.

"Nii-chan, do you know the difference between 'kiseki' and 'miracle'?"

"Both of them mean the same... right?"

That's probably not the case, which is why she asks, but I couldn't think of a difference.

"It's just something I discovered myself, but 'kiseki' also includes your own desires. For example, rambling of someone who luckily miraculously survived his surgery. Or someone who was able to miraculously escape, kind of thing."

"Hmm, I still can't really tell."

"The doctors performs surgery wanting to save and the person escaping wants to escape safely, that is why 'kiseki' happens."

"Then what about 'miracle'?"

"That one is unexpected, good luck. For example, that'd be passing by a person in the city wearing the same T-shirt. You don't really go into the city thinking 'I want to pass by someone in the same T-shirt!'. But, when met with such a situation, it feels like a miracle."

"Being told that it kinda feels like that... or maybe not."

"Is today's date 'kiseki'? Or is it 'miracle'? I wonder."

Upon exiting the complicated premises of the station through the ticket gate, Tomomi's eyes sparkled.

The place I chose... that's.

"O' Akihabara! I have come back!"

"Came back you say, did you live somewhere in this area before? In that case there'll be no freshness. My bad... I failed my research."

Tomomi raised her index finger, then shook it sideways with "tch tch tch".

"That's wrong Nii-chan. This, was an appointment."

"I know nothing of that appointment but... since you seem to be having fun, it doesn't seem like a bad choice."

"Well, Nii-chan is no ota so it can't be helped. By the way... it's actually my first time in Akihabara."

"Same here."

"So it's Akiba virgin siblings, isn't it."

"Please stop putting it that way."

For a few days I stared at the map of this place on my smartphone.

Since the photo data of the street's map were old, the optician store in front of the station seemed to have changed into Seka game centre and a building of Radio Kaikan, the symbol of Akihabara was also under construction there.

Still, the main impression of the city was how I prepared for it.

The station's building was new, but the Electric Town didn't change all that much.

Tomomi's attire today was an extension of her casual clothes. She wore a hoodie and shorts. Her shoes were the sneakers she was accustomed to, taken with emphasis on walking. Also, she had natural, very thin make-up.

Lined up behind us were our today's observers.

Sayuri looked at the square in front of Yamama Denki stores, then turned towards me again.

"Onii-sama. Today we shall properly observe you until the end."

Tomomi showed Sayuri her tongue.

"You don't have to come."

"We can't do that! Yuuki-san and Mika-san, please observe firmly as we..."

Slipping through by Sayuri, Mika rushed towards Seka gaming centre.

Woah, by the entrance to it, there was an accustomed person with a huge umbrella.

"Waaa! Mushroom!"

The character from the application Mika loves was working on sales... in the first place, she had come to Akihabara to play. While chasing after Mika, Yuuki said to me.

"Nii-san, leave Mika-chan to me!"

"S-sure! Take care!"

Tomomi's shoulders were raising and falling lightly.

"I'm not at the age to get excited over a mushroom. Ah! Sayuri, if you want to join that team, don't refrain yourself."

"E-even I do think... it's cute but... I need to properly fulfil the role of observer and report to Selene-san, I'll haunt you from behind like a stalker ghost."

And, about at the same time Sayuri declared that, a mail had arrived at my smartphone. It was from Selene, who was waiting in the apartment.

Wanting to surprise Tomomi, until we reached the destination I didn't say where are we going for today's date, it seems like it was a shock to Selene. Written in the e-mail was this.

『"Going to Akihabara is no fair. The support bussiness is over for today."』

Heck, she suddenly abandoned her duties! Somehow, I thought she might be envious, but was Akihabara that shocking to you, miss Selene.

Peeking into my smartphone, Tomomi laughed.

"She's sulking. Well, Selene's in that kind of state, Sayuri, since you can no longer report anything you don't have to force yourself you know? I mean, your interests are limited to cooking appliances and stuff."

"Certainly, I am interested in the newest oven range and fryer that doesn't use oil, but I'm more interested in Tomomi-san's behaviour who desperately tries to make it you two are alone. Do you intend to do something you feel guilty about? I can't help but be suspicious of that."

Sayuri said that with a smile. Her eyes, were not laughing. Tomomi's shoulders twitched strongly.

"N-no such thing. Rather, in the first place, it's Nii-chan's and my date, being alone is normal, NORMAL!"

"Strictly speaking it's not a date, but practice. Moreover, a second date with Onii-sama... the practice that is, it's too enviable."

Like Habu and Mongoose, the two sisters gazes were scattering sparks. It seems like they'll get into a fight unless I stop them.

"Wa-wait a moment! Sayuri, this time I was the one who invited Tomomi."

"First time hearing that. W-why have you? Does Onii-sama want to date Tomomi-san more and more?"

"Umm... that's... that..."

Tomomi puffed her chest.

"So that I can properly date my boyfriend, we're going to practice for the second time. Isn't that right, Nii-chan?"

She followed up after me. I'll get on that.

"Y-yeah. That's how it is! Think of it as of generous support."

Sayuri poured her teary line of sight towards me.

"I understand. If it's long term support in order for Tomomi-san to take the first step towards her bright future with her boyfriend, I shall not object to it but..."

Her line of sight moved from me towards Tomomi.

"By the way, when will you introduce your boyfriend to us?"

That Tomomi, not only me, but she didn't introduce him to her sisters either.

I can tell it might be hard for her to introduce him to me, but she's trying quite hard to keep him secret. Or maybe just like Selene said...

No good. I can't go doubting Tomomi.

As siblings, we should believe her and cooperate.

"About time we go. We're behind the schedule."

I took Tomomi's hand. Sayuri fell silent dissatisfied. Sorry Sayuri, bear it for today.

Tomomi shook her head cheerfully.

"Yup! Where are we going first Nii-chan?"

I had one standing out store bookmarked on the smartphone's map.

"Hey! Nii-chan, Nii-chan! I want to see Gamers!"

She reacted immediately to the anime store along the street.

"Sure. Let's go then."

We headed to the store, crowded on the weekend. Tomomi rushed to the sixth floor immediately.

The assortment in the corner of the sixth floor were card trading games, she nodded while humming quietly.

"As expected of this assortment. Hmm, tournament starts in the evening... haa?! I don't have my deck, uuu... if I only knew it's Akihabara. Rather, as expected on the Saturday it must be already full of participants."

When I took a glance behind, Sayuri was dutifully waiting outside. Today, she might remain like that the entire time.

Then we visited exhibition area on the fifth floor. In middle of airing, held there was a magical girl anime museum.

Surely, were Selene to be here it would inspire her creativity.

After taking a look around the store and left it, Tomomi took a deep breath.

Because of excitement, her face was slightly flushed.

"It's amazing. There's autograph signing on coloured papers, events everywhere, truly feels like Akihabara!"

"And your shopping?"

"For now let's look around freely! I've memorized the items I'm interested in."

I wonder, just how much is she intending to buy.

When I checked behind us, worried, Sayuri seemed slightly light-headed.

"Are you okay Sayuri?"

"Please don't mind me and have fun on your date. I am but a mere shadow."

Tomomi nodded strongly.

"Then, taking you up on your words, where are we going next Nii-chan?"

We rushed towards the famous pedestrian, central street. When we raised our heads the signboard of Onodenbouya has come into our view. A train was running on top of a green iron bridge, it was possible to look up at it from the underpass. It was a strange sight.

I checked up on the map and without going on the other side of the crossing, I turned to the right.

Since the pedestrian street wasn't working as such today, people overflowed from the sidewalk.

There was quite a lot of foreign tourists. There were not just duty-free shops with electronics, but also ones that sold Japanese fans, Happis and Lanterns, even Japanese dolls.

The electronics like personal computers, smartphones and other high-tech equipment had fused with otaku culture of anime and games.

Even in the wide world this place was unusual. Cool Japan? Was it.

As we proceeded on the sidewalk and through the crosswalk, Tomomi suddenly howled. I picked up that she must have known the store beside us as she suddenly stopped. It must have been that famous.

"It's heeree! Shishinoana! Nii-chan, we're minors so let's proceed with moderation."

Tomomi brought me inside the building with orange walls. Inside, there was an A-hall and B-hall. By the way, the one Tomomi headed to was A-hall. B-hall was aimed at women... something like that. Even though she's a girl, for some reason she wouldn't go to B-hall.

My research was lacking. Well, if she wants to go there then let's do that.

The attraction over here were mostly "doujinshi". Tomomi stopped moving after reaching fourth floor.

"U-uwahhh! Nii-chan, I want to hurry and be adult!"

"What's this all of a sudden?"

Tomomi was lost, completely lost, continuously distressed she finally said "Now, lets keep our bodies pure, Nii-chan!" and gave up on going upstairs. Just what on earth is there from the fifth floor and above?

After purchasing what caught her eyes, the moment she jumped out of the shop, Tomomi immediately rushed to the blue building next to it.

"Animete! I can't help but enter!"

Somehow, ever since we have left the ticket gate, Tomomi was in incredibly high spirits. Like an owner of an overly-enthusiastic dog, I was pulled around by her.

"Anime Tenchou goods... so there's even something like this!"

Keeping up with her when she's so excited must be hard on Sayuri... and, when I suddenly checked behind us Sayuri was standing in the goods corner checking crimson sun visor, puzzled.

No way, she's interested?!

And, seeing my surprised gaze Sayuri put the sun visor back on the shelf, then hurriedly hid in the shadows.

My shoulder was tapped twice.

"Nii-chan is minding Sayuri too much!"

"Oo...woah.?!!"

When I turned around, Tomomi's finger was poked into my cheek.

"A-are you a grade student or what?!"

"Yaay! Nii-chan got caught!"

Seeing Tomomi have fun, I had no energy to get angry.

Even though she hasn't bought anything yet, Tomomi left the building with a refreshed expression.

"Where to next Nii-chan?! Hurry, hurry!"

"I've got a question... is there any difference between these stores?"

"Of course atmosphere and the customer based as well. Also, even though they sell same goods and books, they provide different bonuses!"

Hmm, I don't know what those bonuses are, but being told that I realized there was a lot of girls in Animete.

After returning to the main street we proceeded towards the Suehirocho, then used a crosswalk to go across the street to Ton Quixote.

Tomomi stopped by the lined-up stores.

"Suika Books is famous isn't it. Nii-chan... I'll go on a recon for a lil'!"

The store seemed to have been located in the building's basement.

Although Tomomi is headed to the basement down the stairs, she immediately came back.

"Nii-chan, I want to hurry and become adult! Rather, Nii-chan, hurry up and become adult, then listen to your little sister's wish!"

"It's not like I can become adult because you told me to, right. Anyway, is it fine not to take a look in the store?"

"Uhh, umm... next time! I mean, it's super risque, seriously!"

Tomomi squirmed while blushing. She kinda seems happy and that makes me happy as well.

Where, in what store will Tomomi start shopping properly. I have incorporated time for shopping in the schedule, but it's been going too well and there's time left over.

"Nii-chan, can we do shopping afterwards all at once?"

"Won't going around second time be a hassle?"

"Pleaase. We'll be proceed quickly."

"Got it then. Let's do that."

It seems like Tomomi was the type that did preview of everything and then did shopping altogether. Well, if there's this many stores that interest Tomomi, if she forces herself to look around for as long as possible, she'll surely want to do some shopping.

"Also... umm... I've got one more thing to ask, can we play a game?"

"There's time for that prepared as well."

Making and U-turn at the station, we headed towards the sidewalk.

At Solmap there was a display of a new game. There were quite a few people stopping by.

Passing by Master Donuts, we returned back to under the impressive viaduct.

Club Seka's building was towering right beside us. I pointed my finger towards it.

"Uwahaa! Nii-chan, is it really all right?"

"Yeah. There's a local game centre in which we can play together so today... rampage all you want!"

"Hyeahh! Nii-chan's the best!"

Tomomi pulled both me and Sayuri, entering the building. We immediately moved to the floor with fighting games.

After bursting onto a popular robot fighting game and immediately beat ten people, before I realized spectators have swarmed to watch.

Even though she lost to the eleventh one, it was apparently because of the negative correction from a winning streak. Those who keep winning continuously seem to have their abilities lowered.

The match in which she lost was also close. Honestly, the moves were too fast so I couldn't tell what's going on and the match was settled while opponent had just a one millimetre of energy gauge remaining.

After losing, when Tomomi stood up she received a generous applause from the audience.

Somehow... Tomomi's amazing.

As for Sayuri, she watched Tomomi's play as if wanting to devour the sight. So she was curious about her onee-chan's activities after all. Well, they are sisters.

When we left Club Seka, Tomomi puffed her chest and stretched her back.

"Aww... I was really nervous."

"A winning streak of ten is amazing, isn't it."

"It means I've still a long way to go."

As Tomomi laughed humbly, Sayuri slowly raised her hands.

"I am but a mere shadow, but can I state something?"

Tomomi made a puzzled expression.

"Nn? What is it, Sayuri?"

"Um... i-it was amazing. I didn't understand it, but was impressed."

Momentarily, Tomomi's face turned red. She faced downwards and embarrassedly scratched her cheek with her index finger.

"U-umm... t-thanks."

Her embarrassment was contagious and Sayuri blushed as well.

"I-I'll return to being shadow!"

Sayuri took three steps back and silence had come. Her presence disappeared. She's like a stealth submarine.

Just like Sayuri, I couldn't explain what was amazing about Tomomi's playing.

But, her offence and defence, or rather, her reversing the situation many times despite being forced down was burned into my memory.

It was enchanting combat. Since they were fighting fair and square, they'd get applaud whether they win or lose.

"Nii-chan, where are we going next?"

This time we went around the corner with Club Seka. In Akihabara there were various speciality shops. After going in front of a shop with cables, we stopped at the crossroads. After checking the map on my smartphone, I found our next destination was right at these crossroads.

"Wow! Look, Nii-chan! Memory cards are super cheap here!"

On the outside, there were plastic box goods lined up to which Tomomi got attracted. Staring intently at the price, Tomomi continued to sigh.

"Class 10's 32gb at this price... no, shopping afterwards, I need to be patient!"

From time to time Tomomi cast some magical spells. I think 32gb is the card's capacity, but I wonder what is the class 10.

Tomomi gave up on shopping and took my hand.

"Nii-chan, we're proceeding like this, right?"

"Y-yeah. It's this way."

We passed by a shop with computer electronics.

"There's a lot of people here, but there's also lots of maids."

Ever since we started walking down the side-walk of the main street, there was a lot of women in maid outfits, it felt like a very dense area.

There were flashy red and yellow billboards of grocery stores and maid café's as well.

From the balcony stores maids waved to passers-by.

Once again, I thought it's an amazing place.

"Nii-chan looks surprised."

"Y-yeah. It's amazing."

"So that's how your feedback is."

"Feedback?"

"Your responses are like that of elementary students."

"I-it can't be helped! I'm overwhelmed here!"

As we talked like that and arrived in front of Kokobukiya, Mika and Yuuki have come out of the store with shopping bags in their hands.

"Hey, Nii-san. Is date going well?"

"It seems like it's going well for you."

"Yup. Ah! I'm properly choosing stores it's all right for Mika-chan to be in, so don't worry Nii-san."

"S-sure. Mika, what did you buy?"

"See, see. A cute hair accessory!"

"Accessory? So they're selling those too."

Yuuki nodded.

"They seem to be goods of anime character Chinanda, they seemed to be well made. They were quite expensive, but Mika-chan said 'I want this!' so giving up on purchasing more small things, we bought it instead."

Mika stared at my face intently.

"For telling me about it Nii-chama, Mii-chan will give about five thousand yen worth as thanks later, okay?"

"As thanks?"

"Yup! Surely! Ah! We have to go already. Maple said 'don't pour water on the date'. Then is hot water okay? C'mon, next is Yuuki-neechama's turn to do shopping."

Yuuki waved her hand towards us as Mika pulled her.

"W-well then, we'll be going this way."

"Y-yeah. Take care."

Yuuki and Mika went down the road we have come from, then Tomomi muttered.

"That Yuuki, she's really getting along well with Mika. I wonder, Nii-chan and I will get along the same?"

"We're getting along well enough... right?"

I took Tomomi's hand and nodded.

"I see! I'm glad. I'm getting along well with Nii-chan. We're lovelove aren't we. This kind of this is mutual affection isn't it?"

"U-umm, if you mean sibling love then yes... I think."

Behind us, I seemed feel a blood-thirsty wordless presence... but, not daring to look back I headed for the next destination.

En route I've heard a light electronic sound, at that moment Tomomi pulled my arm and broke into a run.

She raised her voice when we arrived in front of the store.

"It's Super Tomato! Nii-chan, it's here right? It's here? It's here isn't it!"

In front of the speciality store with retro games, Tomomi's excitement reached maximum.

Retro games were once-in-a-lifetime thing. And so, Tomomi bought one game.

"Railway King 2" a famige for family games computer.

It was a second game connected to the "Super-Large Strategy, Railway King" we have played, and was a first game that had the card system that was foundation of entire game systems... or something.

It was very rare because it sold very well. But, being able to get it with the manual and in a good state, I got something really good! Or so, Tomomi seemed satisfied.

Next, we headed towards Y Books. They didn't deal with just books, but also hobby goods.

Tomomi was enchanted by the character figurines.

The character figures that could be won even in convenience stores' "first prize lotteries" were here as goods to purchase. Being able to get the characters she

was unable to win from the prizes, Tomomi had an extremely pleased look on her face.

After that we went to a store across the street that had personal computer's parts. I intended to just go on the other side of the street to take a look, but before I realized Tomomi turned into a hungry wolf.

Even though she didn't buy any, she was interested in the parts' price.

Sayuri and I were completely left out. Since Tomomi was fluttering around the parts shop, I decided to take a break in front of the vending machine outside.

"Umm, Onii-sama, is it all right not to stay together?"

"Hmm, as expected I know nothing about PC parts even if I see them. With character figures and stuff, I can still tell something. Rather than that, are you okay Sayuri?"

"At first I was overwhelmed by the atmosphere, but I have gradually accustomed myself. As expected, I wasn't led to buying on impulse like last time."

I checked the time on my smartphone. The date was proceeding smoothly. Even if I add the shopping upon return, there was still time in the schedule.

Suddenly, I spoke of something that's come to my mind.

"Since there's time, how about we go take a look at Kanda Myojin?"

If I'm not wrong, it's not far from here.

"Onii-sama! L-let's do that next time."

"But it's really close isn't it?"

"Umm... when I'm in the ma...main character, and then, please. Today, Tomomi-san is the main character."

"I see, so you're thinking of your onee-chan aren't you, Sayuri."

"I...I do think of my older sister."

With a slightly troubled expression, Sayuri smiled. And as we finished out exchange, Tomomi returned.

"Sorry for the wait Nii-chan! Were you talking with Sayuri?"

"We were talking about how your vitality is amazing."

The corners of Tomomi's mouth loosened.

"Akihabara is granting me power!"

With her return, Sayuri went back to submarine mode.

"U-umm... how were the computer parts?'

"Well, in one word I'd say 'cheap' I guess."

Said Tomomi, and when she started to talk about parts' prices, it seemed like the story will be long... so I decided not to listen to details.

When we headed towards Kurumaehashi street, Tomomi found something yet again and stopped.

"Nii-chan wait! Can we look in here? I can smeel a treasure."

There was an Ayafusen sign. This is a game store... isn't it?

"Y-yeah. Sure."

"Then, I'll be going!"

Just like with the computer parts store, Tomomi rushed inside alone.

And has quickly come back. This feeling... it was the same with the Suika Books store.

"Nii-chan, this is bad! They refuse anyone below 18! Specifically, it's ero and ero, as well as ero!"

"Don't talk specifically!"

"Ehehe, sorry!"

Tomomi was tireless, or rather... I thought she reached the peak earlier, but her momentum was still increasing.

Echizenya. It was a store that had air guns and all the products related to survival games.

"Nii-chan's best! I love you!"

"H-hey hey, that's too much..."

"No need to be so shy."

Looking at the decorated air gun in the glass case her pupils sparkled, Tomomi did a lecture on the beauty of the gun's form for me and Sayuri who was quietly standing in the back.

We had a little bit late lunch at Suehiromachi's Mg.

Although there were multiple restaurants in Akihabara, but according to the information on the net they were all crowded. One station away there was a moderately-crowded restaurant in which we could relax.

"Want to eat at least lunch together?"

"I'm fine here at the counter seats."

Sayuri went alone towards the counter. There's no need to go that far... no, Sayuri wants the date practice to be done properly until the end, it might be important to successfully complete that no one disturbs it.

Having a fun meal together, an important event at a date... is it.

Reconsidering it, I took Tomomi and we sat down by the window seat.

"Nii-chan's schedule management ability is really amazing. Even preparing such a reward, I'm... impressed."

The fact today was the day they sold Spicy Burger, was just a coincidence. Also, I think the reason I was able to prepare the schedule well, was thanks to Sayuri.

"I'm glad that you're happy about it."

Tomomi immediately started fighting the Spicy Burger she was looking forward to for so long.

"Let's eat then!"

She unwrapped the paper and bit onto the burger. A ketchup-like sauce flowed from the edge of her mouth. Yeah, if there's that much sauce coming out... it's dangerous. Truly dangerous.

"Uhyah! Spicy! This is seriously spicy! A ha ha ha ha!"

Because of the extreme spiciness Tomomi started laughing.

"Isn't it? It's really hard. And so, I'm going to trod the easy way."

Staying on safe side, I chose Teriyaki Burger set.

The sweet soy sauce-based base and mayonnaise flavor was irresistible. It wasn't Japanese, but it was good in its own right. When living with Grandma I didn't eat much hamburgers, and even though I eat it like this I prefer Japanese taste. And like that, once again I have recognized my own tastes.

"You have no heart for adventure, Nii-chan! I can get addicted to this spiciness! Hhaa."

With a smile, Tomomi had become teary-eyed. Or rather... she cried. A stream of tears flowed down her cheeks.

"Are you okay? Is it that spicy?"

"There's not enough drink so I'm confiscating Nii-chan's cola!"

Cola from my drink set was taken away by Tomomi.

But I've started drinking it... this, isn't this an indirect kiss?!

No no, calm down. For siblings this much is... actually... it's n-normal.

Tomomi wiped her cheek with her thumb, drank some cola and broke into a smile.

"By the way, for today's date course, did Nii-chan investigate and think of it all?"

"That's right. Since I was thinking about you when doing it, I had quite a lot fun."

We've stopped by places that weren't planned, but it mostly went according to plan.

Suddenly, Tomomi made a serious expression.

All this time she was excited, what happened now?

With a troubled look she raised her eyebrows and muttered.

"I see. See, Nii-chan... always takes care of me."

"You're my important little sister, it's a privilege of an older brother."

"Then, does Nii-chan go to play with his friends?"

"Unfortunately, I don't have friend-like friends."

Mariko's face appeared in my mind, but how to say it, Mariko... doesn't feel like a friend. A childhood friend.

Tomomi continued.

"Umm... I.... no, we're all burden to Nii-chan, we don't want Nii-chan to be restrained by us."

"Don't call it a restraint. I have fun being with everyone and do it because I like it. There's nothing at all for you to worry about."

Her expression had cleared up and she slowly brightened up.

"Thanks, Nii-chan. About that... from now on, if Nii-chan has anything planned... at least for Tuesday, you don't have to mind me! Of course, we don't know how long will our current life continue but... that's why, I want Nii-chan to live freely."

Yuuki and Mika said it as well, but Tomomi too, seems to be worried about me.

"S-sure. Thanks, Tomomi."

Tomomi nodded and bit into the Spicy Burger, once again tears appeared in her eyes.

When she let out a breath after eating, she had a content, serene expression. Tomomi's expressions are really rich in emotions, I never get tired watching them... if I were to tell her that I feel like she'd get angry with "I'm not a spectacle!".

"Nii-chan, dates are really fun aren't they."

"Really... huh. Earlier in Shibuya's date we might have tried too hard."

"Yup. I prefer sneakers for shoes, and in easy-to-move clothes it's effortless. Sorry Nii-chan, I'm not very feminine."

"N-no such thing. You are cute enough like this."

"D-don't flatter me, it's embarrassing!"

I stared intently at her.

"W-what is it, Nii-chan."

"When you go on a date with your boyfriend, how about you propose a date course in which you can enjoy yourself? I have confirmed it with today's date. Even if you try overdoing it, it won't last long. If it isn't a person who'll accept the real you... Onii-chan won't accept him."

Tomomi nodded deeply and lowered her head, then looked up at me like that.

"Auu... wait, Nii-chan. I have something to consult you about."

Her body plunged forward and Tomomi whispered into my ear.

"I want to be alone together with Nii-chan no matter what."

"No matter what you say..."

"With Sayuri here... I c-can't say it."

Tomomi's eyes were serious as she appealed to me.

The opportunity has suddenly appeared.

Sayuri stood up from her seat to go to restroom.

Confirming that, Tomomi stood up and pulled my arm.

"Scratch that! Come! Nii-chan!"

"H-hey! Sayuri isn't..."

"It's fine, hurry!"

Leaving Sayuri in the restaurant, pulled by Tomomi I left the store. Tomomi started to run towards an unpopular side street beside the restaurant.

Soon enough there was a ringtone of a mail on my smartphone. Tomomi gasped.

"Ah! GPS! Nii-chan turn off power as well!"

"Eh? Smartphone's?"

"If you don't we'll be found."

It seemed like we were running away from Sayuri, I wonder if it's fine to do as Tomomi says.

"Hey, Tomomi... is it something that'll hurt Sayuri?"

"Umm... possibly...no, but... I... hurt everyone."

Standing in spot, Tomomi made a tormented expression.

"By everyone, you mean not only Sayuri, but also Selene, Yuuki and Mika?"

"Yup. Also, Nii-chan too. Please... I want us to talk alone."

The always-energetic Tomomi had a fragile expression as if she were to shatter on touch.

I turned the smartphone off.

"Got it. This is fine, right."

"Thanks, Nii-chan. For believing me."

After that Tomomi started to walk in a zig-zag pattern. We moved away from Akihabara and Suehirocho Station. I had no idea where exactly were we since I couldn't look at smartphone's map.

We walked for about five minutes. If we don't contact her for a long time, Sayuri will be worried.

There was no park to speak in calmly, we were alone in an alley behind grey and cream-coloured buildings lined up.

There was no pedestrians here. Perhaps because it was far from the main street, not even cars passed by.

The urban hustle and bustle from earlier seemed like a lie.

There wasn't a speckle of a romantic atmosphere, but Tomomi suddenly clung onto me. It was enough to get me nervous, my head had turned blank.

"H-hey. You've wanted to talk about something, right?"

When Tomomi looked up at me as if to beg for something, our faces were so close we could feel each other's breath.

"Nii-chan... sorry."

"...what happened? Apologizing all of a sudden."

For a moment she made a pained expression and turned away.

I waited for her words. Tomomi like a scared kitten hiding in the shadows, fearfully took a glance at me before turning towards me again.

Her lips trembled with fear, and she confessed.

"You see... I... don't have a boyfriend."

After she finished saying that, Tomomi closed her eyes tightly.

Rather than Tomomi who was in the same grade as me, instead there was... a childish Tomomi.

That's the feeling I had. A young, small and ready to cry any moment Tomomi... I was genuinely relieved. Despite the fact we were the same age, I loved this little sister of mine dearly.

Selene's unreasonable "I somehow think so" was right on the target.

I wasn't angry or mad at Tomomi in the least.

"I see. I wonder what's this. It might sound weird, but I'm relieved."

"...he? A-aren't you angry?"

I nodded.

"It's been just a month, but Tomomi... hearing my little sister got a boyfriend, it was a slightly traumatic event to me. That's why I'm relieved to hear it's a lie. Even though I should congratulate my popular little sister, I acted immature as an older brother."

"N-Nii-chan..."

"If I said something like this, I'd bind you. If you have found someone you really love, I'll cheer on you. Bless you. Because I'm Tomomi's... everyone's onii-chan."

After looking downwards distressed, she nodded saying "yes".

Did I do something bad again?

"Are you all right, Tomomi?"

Tomomi raised her head and laughed.

"I-it's okay, Nii-chan."

It didn't seem like she was angry or depressed, so I was relieved.

Now then, I have decided to support my little sister's love, but that aside... as her older brother, I need to properly tell her off.

"But, this isn't good Tomomi. Lying to everyone around you. Make sure to properly apologize to Sayuri and others."

Tomomi paled.

"A-about that, for the sake of protecting onee-chan's dignity, I implore you please let me keep it confidential, Onii-sama!"

"You, Onii-sama... hey hey. Why did you lie in the first place?"

Tears appeared in her eyes.

"Cause', as the eldest daughter I can't go about flirting with Nii-chan... and so."

"I'm not sure if you should be saying 'flirting'."

"And earlier... we went together to Murasaki-san."

"Y-yeah. Was it that bad?"

"No. It's true that I wanted to be of use to Nii-chan! But it didn't go well... and we didn't go to family restaurant... it was weather's fault so it couldn't be helped but, somehow... abruptly... I could no longer understand myself and... you were going on dates with Selene in the evenings, I got envious of thatt."

I embraced Tomomi's head and pat her head gently.

"I see. Even though you are a little sister you tried to become a splendid onee-chan and... overdid it a little."

"Sorry. I'm sorry Nii-chan. Uwahhhhhnn. I thought that if I'll say I have boyfriend, Nii-chan will pay more attention to meeee! I'm a bad little sister who tried to use Nii-chan's kindnessss!!"

Tomomi started to behave like spoiled child and cry.

I pat her head and gently rubbed her back.

"I too have relied too much on you, as the eldest sister. Sorry."

"It's not Nii-chan's faulttt. At Shibuya, and today, Nii-chan properly date me and I kept tricking Nii-chann... it's all my faulttt."

It seemed like it'll take some time until Tomomi settles down.

"Uuu, I'm really sorry."

Tomomi said so while using polite speech unlike her, then I turned on the smartphone. I activated the GPS as well. As long as we don't move from this place, one of them might come here looking for us.

But well, that'll take time so let's send a mail to Sayuri saying we're fine. I made in front of the Akihabara's station the point for reassembly.

This time, openly I'll explain the circumstances to everyone and have Tomomi apologize... and so, the dating practice had ended with a strange twist.

——Until we reach the station.

At the Akihabara Station's ticket gate were Yuuki and Mika who arrived earlier. And... weighing down on Yuuki's shoulders, was a girl in black goth clothes.

"...zhe...haa...people...like insects."

"Selene?! Did you come here alone?"

Yuuki nodded with a troubled expression.

"She really wanted to come to Akihabara, so she actually came but... Selene-chan's completely out of breath."

With a pale face Selene stared at the scenery outside the Akihabara's ticket gate and muttered absent-mindedly.

"...so Akihabara... really exists."

Like an explorer that had reached an unexplored region from tales speaking his last words.

Meanwhile, probably because she was running around all over, Sayuri joined us covered in sweat.

"Onii-sama, I'm glad you're safe... eh, Selene-san, why?!"

Her protests against Tomomi were blown away, it seems like Sayuri was taken aback by the fact Selene had come to Akihabara.

Mika worriedly looked into Selene's face.

"Selene-neechama, d-don't die... you can't die, I'll be sadd..."

"...M-Mika-chan... live on my part... as well."

At worst we might even need to call an ambulance at this rate.

I was surprised by how Selene did her best to come here all alone, but it would be best that she's accustomed to it so that we don't have a commotion with an ambulance here. If she starts saying "If I go outside and ambulance has to come, I'll feel like dying", she'll start holing herself up again.

I decided.

"All right... we're going back! Retreat!"

"...finally...finally got to Akihabara... and yet...uu uu...too many people and my eyes are spinning."

"Selene. You did well. Let's go back for today. Next time we'll go further after preparing ourselves."

"...how frustrating. How regrettable."

Tomomi, who was silent the entire time had nodded.

"Selene, if you're drunk with the number of people, then close your eyes and breathe deeply."

"...yes. Su—haa, su—haa."

Just as she was told to by Tomomi, Selene closed her eyes and started breathing deep.

"...I calmed down a little."

"I'll pull you by hand until we reach home, let's go back. When you calm down——there's something I have to tell everyone."

After declaring that, Tomomi pulled Selene gently by her hand. With her eyes still closed Selene pulled her long black her behind herself, led by Tomomi she tumbled as she passed through the ticket gate she exited a moment earlier.

Selene's stay in Akihabara lasted less than five minutes.

After getting on the train, Tomomi was suddenly startled.

"Oh no, Nii-chan! I didn't do any shopping!!"

Part of it was her own fault, unfortunately, she'll have to do it next time.

After switching to JR Private Railway, Selene finally opened her eyes and recovered. It seems like she calmed somehow.

That's when Tomomi stood up from the seat and confessed everything to the lined-up little sisters.

When Tomomi was talking, Mika had a blank look on her face. But then, saying "I'm glad Tomomi-neechama didn't get a boyfriend", she made a wonderful smile.

Yuuki didn't seem angry. Relieved, rather. And, maybe I have relied too hard on on Tomomi-oneechan... she said.

Selene didn't look particularly surprised, just as I expected, what about it? She said and had gone limp. Well, she had exhausted her entire day's worth of energy, it can' tbe helped that she can't keep thinking.

The one who displayed a most severe reaction was Sayuri.

After Tomomi and I disappeared, it seems like she scoured for us in panic. Her intuition seemed quite sharp as she made to investigate the back alley we were in soon after we left it.

She focused on searching the places without any people. Sayuri is really dreadful.

And that Sayuri puffed up her cheeks and said to Tomomi.

"I-I knew it's something like this. In the first place, there's no way an unfeminine girl like Tomomi-san can get a boyfriend."

"W-what! This time it's my bad. But this and that are two different things! Even Nii-chan said that I'm c-cute!"

Then Yuuki hurriedly entered in between the two.

"Well well, you two calm down."

Mika stared at Tomomi.

"Tomomi-neechama got it so good, going out with Nii-chama. But see, Mii-chan too had lots of fun with Yuuki-neechama. It's great too, right!"

Boasting instead, Mika laughed happily.

While still limp, Selene muttered.

"...there's too many humans. Need to thin them out."

Unexpected, scary declaration?!

"Fuaaaa..."

While retorting in my mind, I suddenly let out a large yawn. Induced, Mika also yawned, she leaned her head on Yuuki next to her and closed her eyes.

"Fuaa～～hh. Really, you're causing trouble to others. Please stop doing such things in the future."

After being dragged around a place she wasn't used to, Sayuri rubbed her eyes sleepily.

For now, it seems like Sayuri forgave Tomomi for this time's matter.

Without any grudge left behind, relieved I hung my head further dazed.

"Nii-san, I got sleepy as well."

"...ssuu...suu..."

From beside Yuuki, Selene started to breathe in her sleep.

Tomomi laughed.

"Nii-chan and Yuuki seem to tired from being an escort on the date, you two can go to sleep."

Yuuki rubbed her eyes.

"Is it okay? Isn't Tomomi-chan tired as well?"

"I'm still energetic. Yuuki, sleep until we arrive at the station, too. I'll wake you up when we do."

She hesitated for a bit, but Yuuki too, nodded.

"Okay. I'll do so then."

Snuggling up with Mika, Yuuki closed her eyes.

"C'mon Nii-chan, don't hold back."

"Tomomi, you aren't forcing yourself to be onee-chan here, are you."

"Nope! From now I won't force myself or endure."

"I see. Then... just for a ten minutes."

The moment I closed my eyes, the comfortable shaking of the train almost took away my consciousness.

My ear felt ticklish.

"Thanks, Nii-chan."

Suddenly, something soft touched my cheek.

Before I could consider what was it, my consciousness melted and I fell asleep.

5th of May, Sunday - Epilogue

With difficulties, we have returned to the mansion.

For the dinner I asked a home delivery service for a lunch. Sayuri said "I'll make something!" but she was dizzy just from standing, letting her hold a kitchen knife was dangerous.

Selene was half-asleep as she ate dinner, Yuuki and Mika too seemed tired from playing.

Tomomi... had a peaceful expression.

I think she was relieved to have confided everything.

We took bath in order and went to bed early.

I slept like a log.

The next morning, when everyone ate breakfast in the room 701, Sayuri suddenly declared.

"I found a boyfriend as well, Onii-sama! Please pay attention to me! Please have special date practice with me."

As I tried to respond to Sayuri, Selene quietly raised her hand.

"...I got an air boyfriend. A 2d character."

As I stared at Sayuri's and Selene's face alternately, Yuuki shyly raised her hand.

"Me too... I h-have a boyfriend too Nii-san! The setting is that of an ex-vice student council president!"

Mika raised both her hands in banzai gesture.

"Then Mii-chan too! Mii-chan is looking for a splendid man to be Maple's dad!"

The gazes of the four little sisters concentrated on me.

"Hey hey... wait a second. No way, you want a fair date practice with each of you...?"

Tomomi crossed her arms and nodded.

"All right! I'll help everyone with the date practice. Leave support to me!"

Mika shook her head lightly.

"Umm, Mii-chan prefers everyone go together rather than separate!"

Then Yuuki smiled.

"Same for me I guess. If I'm with Nii-san alone I'll probably get too nervous."

Selene gave a small nod.

"...with bunch of unknown people, it's scary. It's better with many people I know."

The three seemed to hold the same opinion, their requesting gazes gathered on Sayuri.

In the atmosphere that had spread, Sayuri's shoulders drooped and she sighed.

"I-I understand. Please don't stare at me like that... haa. Well then, tomorrow let's all go on a date. Is that all right, Onii-sama?"

When I was sleeping the little sisters meeting might have been held.

"Y-yeah. But, where will we all go?"

Mika happily raised her voice.

"Maumauland!"

Then Sayuri squinted.

"In that case, I'll prepare a perfect plan. Since we're going, I'll prepare boxed lunches as well. Although we can't eat in the park, there's a lot of space outside where we can eat lunch. We'll temporarily exit during the lunch and return afterwards... we can do that."

"I didn't know that."

I furrowed my eyebrows. Sayuri stared at my face anxiously.

"Um, is there a problem, Onii-sama?"

I hurriedly cleared my expression.

"Nice plan Sayuri! But I wonder if Murasaki-san will permit it."

Tomomi tilted her head in puzzlement.

"Who cares about permissions! Let's go, Nii-chan!"

I recalled Maumauland's schedule Sayuri showed me before.

"If we proceed with Sayuri's plan, we'll see evening fireworks at eight thirty-five, then pass by the souvenir store and go home. Considering the suddenness and the bad physical condition we'll get tired, so it's not a bad idea."

Yuuki held her chin between her index finger and thumb, pondered for a moment and then spoke up.

"If not for that, we might end up coming home late."

"That's right, Yuuki. Of course, planning to come home early might be good, but our stay will shorten because of that, considering it's crowded during holidays we'll have to give up on the popular attractions... were we at least accompanied by an adult, we could go even return late."

Tomomi showed me a thumbs up and smiled, showing her white teeth.

"Let's go ask Murasaki-san to accompany us then!"

That was quite a dynamic idea.

"I-is that all right?"

Other than Mika, everyone here was bad with Murasaki-san. Including me, that is.

Still smiling, Tomomi responded.

"To find Murasaki-san's weakness I think it's good to try many things. For example having her ride on the scream machine... and such? Well, calling it a weakness might be exaggerating."

"I see. Speaking of which, I don't really know anything about Murasaki-san either. What kind of food does she like? What kind of books does she read? And so on."

Tomomi continued.

"Know your enemy and know yourself and you can fight a hundred battles without disaster, Nii-chan!"

If I'm not wrong that's Sun Tzu's art of war, isn't it. I nodded.

"If we get along better with Murasaki-san, the situation might change... huh. What does everyone think?"

Selene muttered absent-mindedly.

"...a bit scary."

Sayuri was anxious as well.

"I'll definitely get nervous."

Yuuki looked at my face and nodded.

"I'm in favour. Murasaki-san might deny it herself, but she surely will want to go. I mean, going with everyone will be fun."

Mika raised both her hands in banzai gesture.

"Murasaki-neechama is coming? Yayy!"

Seeing the youngest's smile, Selene gave in.

"...yup, let's go with that."

She spoke curtly and shook her head in approval. Following suit, Sayuri also nodded.

"I understand, Onii-sama. This too is an ordeal. I'll show you I can overcome it!"

With everyone's opinions gathered, Tomomi stood up.

"Let's immediately have negotiations then. Ah! Mika, can you do something? Hide behind Nee-chan and just peek out to stare at Murasaki-san."

"Yup! I'll do it!"

It seems like Tomomi has some kind of plan.

"If it doesn't work, giving up is also essential part."

Apologizing ahead of time, I stood up from my seat.

After breakfast, with Maple-carrying Mika, we headed towards room 202 with Tomomi who had some kind of plan in mind.

When we rang Murasaki-san'\s intercom, "please wait ten minutes" she said.

After exactly ten minutes we were invited inside the room.

Murasaki-san waited for us with a frosty expression.

"If you contacted me in advance I wouldn't have made you wait."

"I-I'm sorry."

"Please state your bussiness."

Let's be honest here.

"Um, tomorrow we thought of going to Maumauland with everyone, would Murasaki-san come together with us?"

It was a bold proposal, even if I say so myself.

Possibly because she didn't expect such a request from us, Murasaki-san's expression turned blank.

"M-my apologies, so it won't do? Even though it's holiday, you must be having lots going on."

"U-umm... that's... I have no urgent work to do tomorrow but..."

No way, is Murasaki-san shaken?!

Mika stood behind me and stared intently at Murasaki-san.

Then she came out a step forward.

"Nii-chama, did you finish talking? Murasaki-neechama is going isn't she? T-then! Next, Mii-chan's want to talk with Mursaki-neechama."

"Y-yes, what is it?"

While she still hasn't stated whether she will go to Maumauland, questioned, Murasaki-san spoke in a twisted voice. It seems like Mika was completely convinced Murasaki-san is going.

Mika opened Maple's zipper and took out a small gift box from inside.

Passing it to Murasaki-san, Mika bowed.

"Murasaki-neechama, thank you for always."

"W-what is this..."

"You see, see, Nii-chama said 'if you give Murasaki-san gift for taking care of you, she'll be happy'. Mii-chan thought it's a good idea, please accept it."

For a moment, Murasaki-san's functions came to full stop.

"Open and take a look!"

"Y-yes, excuse me."

It seemed like Mika's voice solved the hypnosis, Murasaki-san opened the gift package with trembling fingers.

What came from within, was a hair clip she Mika bought in Akihabara.

A replica of accessory an anime character wears... wasn't it. I thought it would be more like a toy, but it wasn't so at all.

Staring at the gift she received from Mika, Murasaki-san muttered.

"A wonderful... hair clip, isn't it.'

Murasaki-san trembled more and more like a scared Chihuahua.

Whether she was happy or embarassed, I couldn't tell.

"Put it on! Ah! Mii-chan will put it on for you!"

Mika rushed over to Murasaki-san and put the hair clip on her bangs. The hair clip had a beautiful purple stone on it, it fit Murasaki-san's name and image perfectly.

Mika's eyes sparkled.

"Waa, it fits Murasaki-neechama a lot."

Murasaki-san didn't have a smile on her face. It seemed like she was trying to endure something.

"T-thank you very much..."

Her voice was turned over as if she was in middle of aircraft aerobatics.

She stood up from the sofa and turned her back towards us.

"Aaa! Don't be so shy!"

Mika moved around her and looked up at Murasaki-san's face.

I wonder just what kind of expression does she have. Rather.... she's trembling real strong, is she all right? Worried, I called out to her.

"Umm, Murasaki...-san?"

Her trembling immediately subsided.

"Well then. I'll hurry and arrange the tickets ahead of the time. Seven of them. Since it's holidays according to regulations they won't be selling tickets on the day itself."

Hearing that Mika happily raised her arms with a "yaay!".

Umm... seven of them means...

While I was confused, Tomomi elbowed me.

"We did it, Nii-chan!"

Since she's willing to arrange it, in other words... the plan succeeded?!

"Is it really okay? Or rather... um."

Murasaki-san calmed her breathing and continued with a frosty tone of voice.

She was still turned with her back towards me and Tomomi.

"If it's just minors, it'll be worrying. Also, this too in the end, is part of the little sister selection. In the amusement park I want to see who is the most fitting to be the little sister. Doesn't Yoichi-san think so?"

"Y-yes! Exactly so!"

I ended up replying like that. Is that fine, with such a reason?!

Mika who was staring at Murasaki-san's face continued to raise her hands happily.

"I'll meet Maumau-san! Yayy, yaaayy!"

Next to me, Tomomi whispered under her breath.

"The trick's timing was perfectly calculated. But, above all, Mika's cuteness is the highest justice."

And like that, it happened that we suddenly are going to Maumauland tomorrow.

Based on Sayuri's notes, the plan to conquer (?) Maumauland has been conceived.

Yuuki checked the distance Mika could walk by herself. We prepared break time as not to tire her out too much.

Selene too said "It's all right if it's with everyone". Getting to Akihabara by herself must have gave her new self-confidence. Once she gets used to crowds of people, she'll be able to take off the eyemask and start going outside... or so she said.

Tomomi investigated the transportation. Since Mika's height wasn't enough for some attractions, we have removed these from the plan.

Sayuri summarized the plan in her notebook.

I've mostly looked over them as they did it. Or rather, seeing the little sisters work excitedly there was nothing I could help with.

An amusement park, huh. It wasn't the Maumauland Jinya-san took me to, but a little of the excitement from back then have returned to me.

On that evening, the little sisters went back to their rooms in order to prepare for tomorrow.

With that said though, they couldn't return to their own rooms until midnight because of the smart keys.

Today too I brought sleeping Mika back to her room.

As I thought, I'd prefer some improvement when it comes to this.

Rather than about Maumauland, I should have asked Murasaki-san about this first... well, it's too late for that now.

Of course, I was fine with everyone staying until Monday morning as well.

Better yet, if everyone ended up living on the seventh floor... I thought.

How long are we going to remain like this.

A story I've heard from somewhere had crossed my mind.

People mostly don't know when they're going to die.

If sentenced to death by the doctor because of an incurable disease, they have a rough idea, so it's just "mostly".

Still, there are people who live longer than the time they're told by the doctors, as well as those whose condition suddenly changes and they die before that.

Even in good health, you might get into an accident. Jinya-san too, was surely like that.

No one knows when will the end come.

Because we don't know, we live as not to have any regrets on that day... I think.

While I absent-mindedly thought of such things lying down in the bed in my room... a message came through the STRING. It was from Mariko.

Do you have time next Friday? Is what was written.

Friday was Mika's day but... She just told me yesterday to use some time for myself also, I continued to refuse and apologize to Mariko all the time.

Without thinking about anything special I responded with "I have time".

I didn't think that a casual reply like this would result with such a thing.

Afterword

I was able to deliver this second volume. It's a gift to those cheering me on and supporting by reading the first volume. Thank you very much... something came?!!

Yuuki: "About me having not enough show time".

T-that's... the thing where author talks with the characters isn't it. ...*gulp*. Is this the black history of mine catching up to me, remorse for not becoming a priest?

Yuuki: "This time, I've played a very modest part, am I going to be more active in the third volume?"

Uuu... um, don't look at me with such sparkling eyes.

Yuuki: "Next time's Maumauland, right? Surely, Murasaki-san and I will enter a triangle carnage where we compete for Mika-chan. But I won't lose. I'll go take some pictures with Mika-chan and Mickey **use!"

Stop! That's not from Maumauland. It's the no-good one.

Rather, didn't the characters change in the story?

Yuuki: "If you don't do at least that much, I won't stand out at all. Rather, loving curry and black coffee... just how much girl power do you intend to deprieve me of?"

There's lots of girls who love curry and black coffee, isn't there!

Yuuki: "It might be so, but you should bring out more of my cuteness. Rather than pull it out, you need to push it out. Push my cuteness out!"

Push you say... but in the first place, you aren't one that stands out, are you.

Yuuki: "That's... true, but. Everyone's so cute and I'm the only one hidden... having just one character with such thin presence, the entire situation feels scary like it could all break down."

I see, there's also that...

Yuuki: "Wait, let's not count that! Make it so you didn't hear it! C-c'mon, I must have something right? Like Selene's unique mysterious charm, I'm not familiar with clothes so I'd ask her to teach me stuff. From time to time I'll show my seriousness, I think a slightly depressed character can work."

Eh, ah... yes.

Yuuki: "Tomomi-chan is a little sister yet she has an older sister's charm. This time her older sister's charm was aggravated, but that's kinda feminine and cute. I envy her that more than anything. Flirting with Nii-san on a date like that..."

You've had a date as well haven't you.

Yuuki: "Dates with Mika-chan are a different case."

Then what about Sayuri?

Yuuki: "Honestly she might be the one I envy the most. She's active and straightforward. I too... would like to get closer to Nii-san. But, our characters would overlap... uu. It's troubling."

About Mika... I guess there's no need to ask.

Yuuki: "Obviously, she's an angel! With that said, make sure to make me more active, all right?!"

She said a tsundere's line and went back?!!

Umm, I'll consider it positively. (grin)?!!

And so, I'm presenting the second volume to you. How was it?

For the end, thanks to S-sama who helped me bring out the little sisters' charm. Kakao-sama who made even cuter illustrations than the ones in volume one. And, the thanks to you all who have kept up with me until the end!

Sugiyama Ryuu

Hello, Kakao here.

How did you like "Omae wo Onii-chan ni shite yarouka!?"...?!

Continuing after the first volume, I felt happy feeling the atmosphere after the illustrations were passed! Personally, I'm curious about the continuation and I can't wait to read it...!

Well then, see you again!